



INTERIM REPORT

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PREPARED FOR:

THE TOWN OF BETHEL, CT



DATE: 12 NOV 15

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LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY



One of the fliers announcing the public kick-off for "Bethel Forward"

OVERVIEW

The DPZ team kicked off the public outreach component of this effort by holding stakeholder interviews in Bethel on September 16 and 17. Gianni Longo (GLA), Joseph Balskus (CDM Smith), Kennedy Smith (CLUE GROUP), Robert Orr (ROA), and Michael Weich (DPZ Partners) interviewed a total of ten groups including:

- Downtown business owners (two groups)
- TOD property owners
- Downtown property owners
- Realtors
- Local builders and architects
- Town employees
- Community groups
- Downtown residents and Bethel neighborhood associations
- Planning & Zoning Commission, Economic Development Committee, and Board of Selectman

This section summarizes key recurring points made in the course of the interviews. They represent perceptions and beliefs based on the stakeholders' experience as businesses and property owners, developers, residents, and downtown advocates.

The information is organized in three sections:

- What We Heard
- Preliminary Guiding Principles
- Miscellaneous Items

In addition, attached are three documents submitted by interview participants: the Town of Bethel TOD Study Regulatory Considerations, Thoughts on Bethel Forward, submitted by neighbors on Grand Street, and the copy of a parking plan included in the 1958 Bethel Plan of Development.

The interviews are the first step in engaging Bethel stakeholders and residents. Public meetings were held on October 1 and October 29 and the Bethel Design Charrette to be held the week of November 16 will add additional insights on community concerns, values, attitudes, and aspirations. The public comments collected in these meetings will help guide the development of the Bethel Forward plan together with a rigorous analysis of infrastructure, land use, and economic conditions, conducted concurrently.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

WHAT WE HEARD

Downtown is Bethel's greatest asset...

- Downtown is historic, charming, walkable, and well scaled.
- It has shops and restaurants that lend to an artsy, funky feel.
- It has businesses such as the cinema, bike shop, and bookstores that attract visitors from throughout the region.
- It is authentic and it developed organically over time.
- It is the one place that brings the community together, especially during special events. The Craft Beer Festival has been very successful. The annual soccer tournament attracts families from well outside Bethel.

Downtown is in decline...

- There are vacancies and empty storefronts.
- Business turnover is high.
- Businesses have shifted from selling goods to services, diminishing downtown draw.
- The Summer Festival is a good case study. It used to be a big attraction. It was lost because, toward the end, it drew more outside vendors than existing Bethel businesses.
- There is no coordinated strategy for business attraction and marketing.
- Parking requirements inhibit redevelopment and expansion of existing properties.
- Rents have increased as properties have changed hands.
- Higher rents diminish opportunities for small business creation and survival.
- The role of a business incubator was once a downtown strength.

There is need for more, or more convenient, parking...

- Parking supply in downtown is limited.
 - Events show that Bethel has a parking problem;
 - Connecticut DOT has recently removed on street parking along Greenwood Avenue compounding the problem.
- There is sufficient parking but it is poorly marked. Residents know where parking is. Visitors do not.
- Consolidation of parking behind buildings on both sides of Greenwood Avenue, first proposed in the 1958 Bethel Plan of Development, has not been pursued. It requires cooperation and agreement among property owners.
- Parking in the new development should not further burden downtown parking.

There is general support for redevelopment in the TOD study area...

Note: Interviews detected no major opposition to the TOD concept, with the exception of those downtown business and property owners who see the TOD as directly threatening downtown viability.

There may not be a clear understanding of what a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is and of the type of buildings, densities, and mix of uses likely to be included. A definition/explanation is required as we move to more public engagement activities. TOD redevelopment is seen as an opportunity to:

- Increase the number and diversity of downtown residents;
- Expand walkability and add bike paths and walking trails;
- Make the wetlands into a space for passive recreation;
- Improve connectivity between downtown and the rail station;
- Bring about visual and functional improvements.
- The area's property owners and developers are supportive of redevelopment and are "eager to be involved in the planning."

The TOD plan must not dilute the viability of downtown...

Note: Concerns about the TOD plan having a negative effect on downtown were expressed numerous times and in a variety of ways across all stakeholder groups.

- Retail in the new development should not be drawn from existing downtown business.
- The plan should include incentives needed to revitalize and modernize existing downtown properties.
- Businesses in the new development should be complementary to those in downtown.
- The plan should recommend the best (complementary) mix of uses for both downtown and the new development.
- Complementary business clusters mentioned include: the arts (expanding on three new art related initiatives), wellness (expanding on the success of Bethel Cycle), apparel to complement existing vintage clothing outlets, and bookstores (adding to the four bookstores already operating in Bethel)
- "Fix the town center first, then develop a new town center."

Demand for downtown housing is strong...

- Rental housing is driving the market.
- Millennials have increased demand for rental housing but there is also a "huge demand for housing for baby boomers" who are downsizing and who cannot find the one floor living conditions they are looking for.

The ability of Bethel to support mixed uses is questioned...

Note: On several occasions, participants mentioned the need for an analysis of where residents shop and what type of businesses the Bethel market can support.

- It is tough to obtain financing for new business ideas.
- Only established businesses seem to be able to get financing.
- Banks value mixed use a lot less than the higher value residential.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

There are regulatory barriers that the TOD plan should address...

- Sewer capacity is perceived as an insurmountable obstacle.
- The perception is that “Public Works says there is no more capacity.” And that “Unless allocation methods change no new residential can be built in the TOD area.”
- Sewer capacity is allocated to individual properties and acts as development cap.
- There is a disconnect between decisions made by the Public Utility Commission and decisions made by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- The plan “must resolve this conflict.”

Affordability bonuses are a source of concern...

- By providing deed restricted affordable housing developers can ignore zoning regulations and increase density in their development.
- If the plan requires affordable units, the Town should streamline the process for handling affordability requirements.

Permitting is lengthy and unpredictable...

- The permitting process is lengthy and needs to be streamlined.
- There is a lack of clarity and predictability in current development regulations, which lead to time consuming “tweaking of plans after submission.”
- The TOD plan should recommend that the adoption process be simplified.
- Projects that comply with the plan should require no special permits, just site-plan approval and, perhaps, architectural review.

Connecting both sides of the railroad tracks is critical...

Note: This is a key consideration made numerous times and in a variety of ways across all stakeholder groups.

- Must create gated pedestrian connections across train tracks.
- Unless pedestrian connections are established development west of the tracks will not be transit oriented.
- Town should push for establishing pedestrian crossings in the most cost effective and cost efficient way.

Better circulation should tie together various parts of downtown...

- The town center, the part of downtown that everyone loves, has the most character and should be integrated with the TOD development.
- Downtown is very stretched out from Grassy Plain to Chestnut Street.
- The TOD plan should bring together Grassy Plain and the Town Center.
- There are concerns about the current physical conditions of sidewalks including lighting, pot-holes, limited wheelchair accessibility, poor signage, and spotty ADA compliance.
- The plan’s circulation study needs to make access to and circulation within downtown better.

Wetlands are a green resource...

- The study area includes significant wetlands. Watersheds converge north of the rail station from three different directions.
- Lack of elevation compounds problems and complicates storm management. A 50-year storm produces flooding.
- In addition to assisting in storm management, wetlands are an opportunity to create a park that:
 - Adds value to adjacent properties;
 - Enables the development of walkways and bikeways;
 - Creates a green public attraction similar to “ the High Line in NYC” or “the town park in Rye, NY;”
 - Attracts younger residents to downtown.
 - “Bike paths have been very successful in other towns to create a draw to the town and also as recreation for people living in the town.”
 - “Would like to see an arboretum, more open space, bike and walking paths.”

Development will not require expanding schools...

- More development will not hurt the school system or require additional school buildings.
- There are 2,978 students now, down from a peak capacity of 3,900.

How tall is tall?

Note: When probed about building heights interviewees had a variety of reactions.

- Three stories are acceptable.
- Five stories could stick out like a sore thumb.
- It depends on the topography – could see taller buildings.
- The construction type is important. 5A construction type can be done, 3A is more expensive, 1A type construction is out of the question.
- We need to see the relationship of height versus massing and how it appears on the property.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

PRELIMINARY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The summary comments made through the stakeholder interviews provide context for a preliminary set of principles to guide the plan's development. They are:

- **Preserve and enhance the character of downtown Bethel.**
- **Ensure compatibility and mutual benefits between new development and downtown (in scale, connectivity, and economic opportunities).**
- **Expand the range of transportation options and designs.**
- **Improve the regulatory environment to facilitate private investments.**

We recommend that these principles be introduced at the Community Voices workshop prior to the Strong Places, Weak Places, and Opportunities exercise.

Models to study include:

- The TOD at South Norwalk and its evolution over time. Attractive to young people.
- Stony Hill
- Westport, Ridgefield, and Fairfield
- Boulder, CO
- Danville, CA
- Winter Garden, FL



The Town of Bethel invites you to participate in the first public meeting of BETHEL FORWARD.

Community Voices

October 1, 2015

Presentation & Discussion: 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

Meeting Location: General Purpose Room, Clifford J. Hurgin
Municipal Center, 1 School Street, Bethel.

Community Voices will collect your ideas for the future of downtown and the area surrounding the rail station. Using maps, you will identify what works, what does not, and what can be done to make downtown better. Small group discussions will allow your ideas, thoughts, and aspirations to be heard. Your input will become the foundation for BETHEL FORWARD.

For more information visit: www.bethel-ct.gov

COMMUNITY VOICES - SUMMARY REPORT

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

OVERVIEW

The Community Voices workshop took place on October 1, 2015. It was the first public meeting of the extensive Bethel Forward community engagement process.

Community Voices was designed to meet the following objectives:

- Introduce the consultant team to residents
- Share findings of the stakeholder interviews conducted September 16 and 17
- Identify physical sites within the study area and in the immediate vicinity that:
 - Are strong and we can learn from;
 - Are weak and can be improved for the community's benefit; and
 - Identify opportunities for the future.

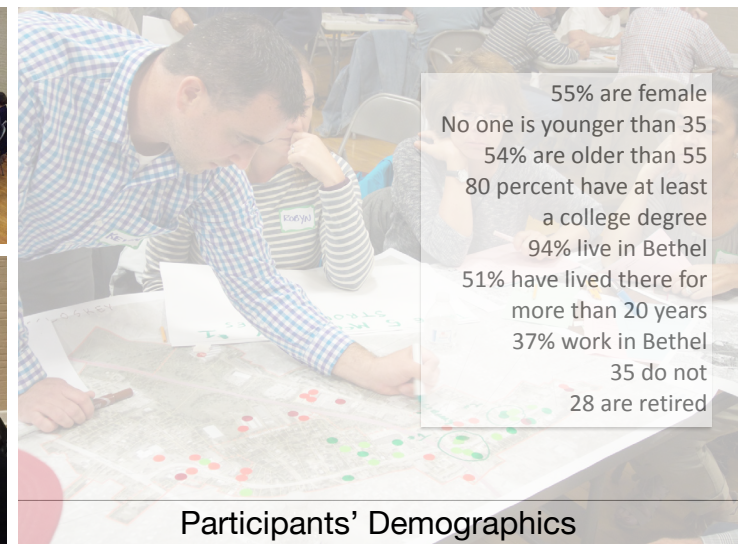
This report includes summaries of the two interactive segments of the workshop: the Strong Places Weak Places mapping exercise and the Opportunities for the Future brainstorm. It also includes the results of the exit questionnaire administered at the workshop. Raw data from each of these activities are available on line at <http://www.bethel-ct.gov/content/117/8612/11809.aspx>.

In the Strong Places Weak Places exercise participants identified strengths and weaknesses within the study area, linking them directly to specific places. The strong places were marked with green dots. The weak places were marked with red dots. They then brainstormed about what makes a weak place weak and what makes a strong place strong.

In the Opportunities for the Future each participant suggested two ideas for improvements in the study area. A total of 208 ideas were collected, sorted, and organized according to four categories and 14 topics

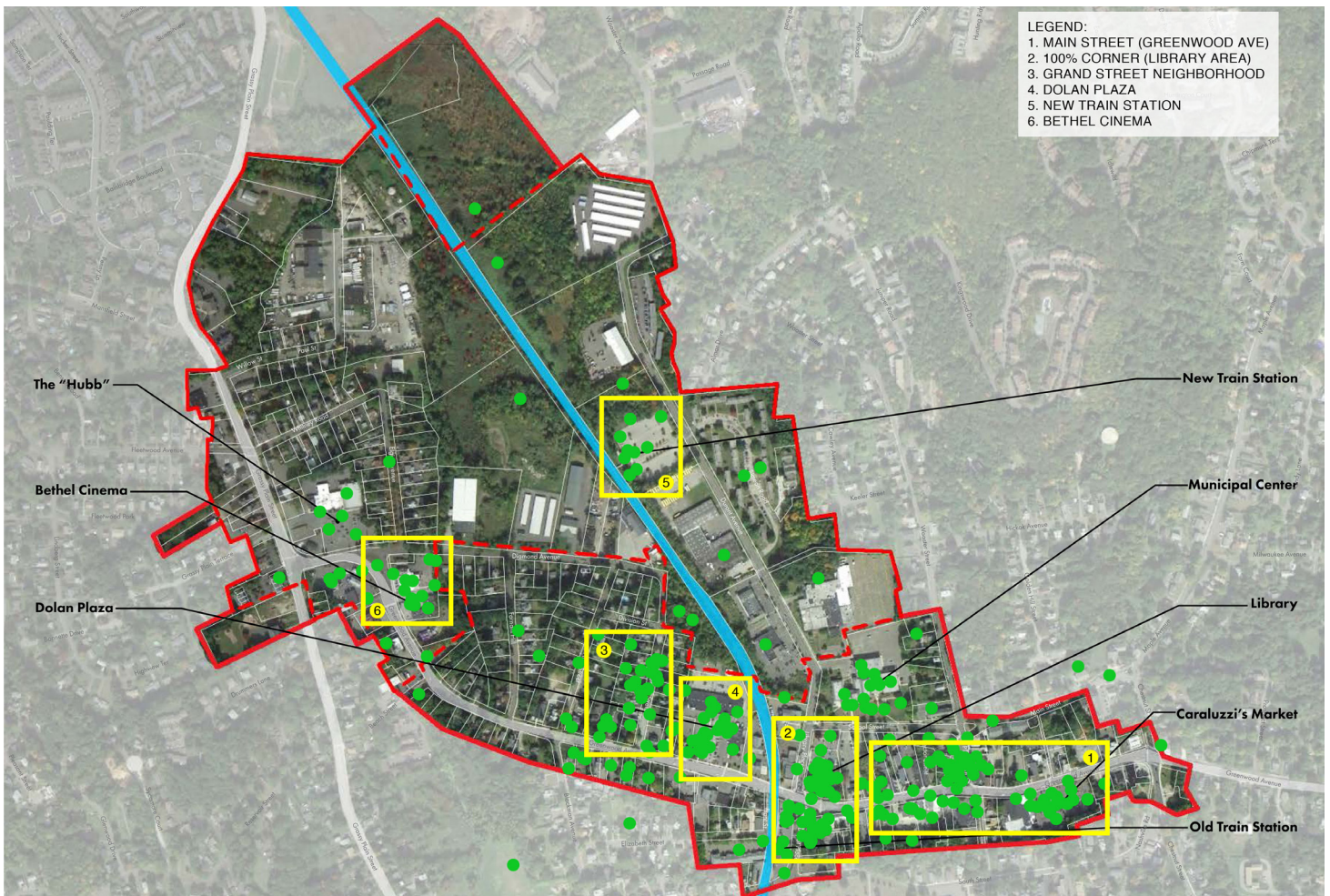
Strong Places Weak Places

The Strong Places Weak Places exercise provided an at-a-glance snapshot of the strengths and weaknesses of the study area. The information was compounded in the three maps shown starting on the next page.



Participants' Demographics

STRONG PLACES



This map shows all the strong places identified by participants. The characteristics of each place are described below synthesizing the participants' own words.

1. Greenwood Avenue

Greenwood Avenue is the core of Bethel's downtown. It is a "charming New England style street with strong architectural character. It is safe for people and home to nice shops, many independently owned." A key part of the downtown core is P. T. Barnum Square an "intimate and friendly" triangular square with a variety of small scale shops and stores, and a European charm and feel. The streets surrounding the square can be easily closed to traffic for events.

2. Library Area

The area surrounding Bethel's Public Library is the town's 100 percent corner. It is the recognized "center of town." It is the stage for "lots of community activities." It has a "green space with a nice lawn, trees and benches, a beautiful re-landscaped street," and historic architectural features. It is "a landmark for outsiders."

3. Grand Street Neighborhood

This neighborhood located walking distance to downtown has "beautiful historic architecture and walkable sidewalks with large shade trees. It is "well maintained and safe for pedestrians."

4. Dolan Plaza

A recent development of "locally owned shops" that has "resisted chain-retail stores" and has integrated "Victorian architecture" in its design. It offers "restaurants for people to dine."

5. New Train Station

The new station "anchors the town and offers access to the region, brings people into Bethel, and gets cars off the road."

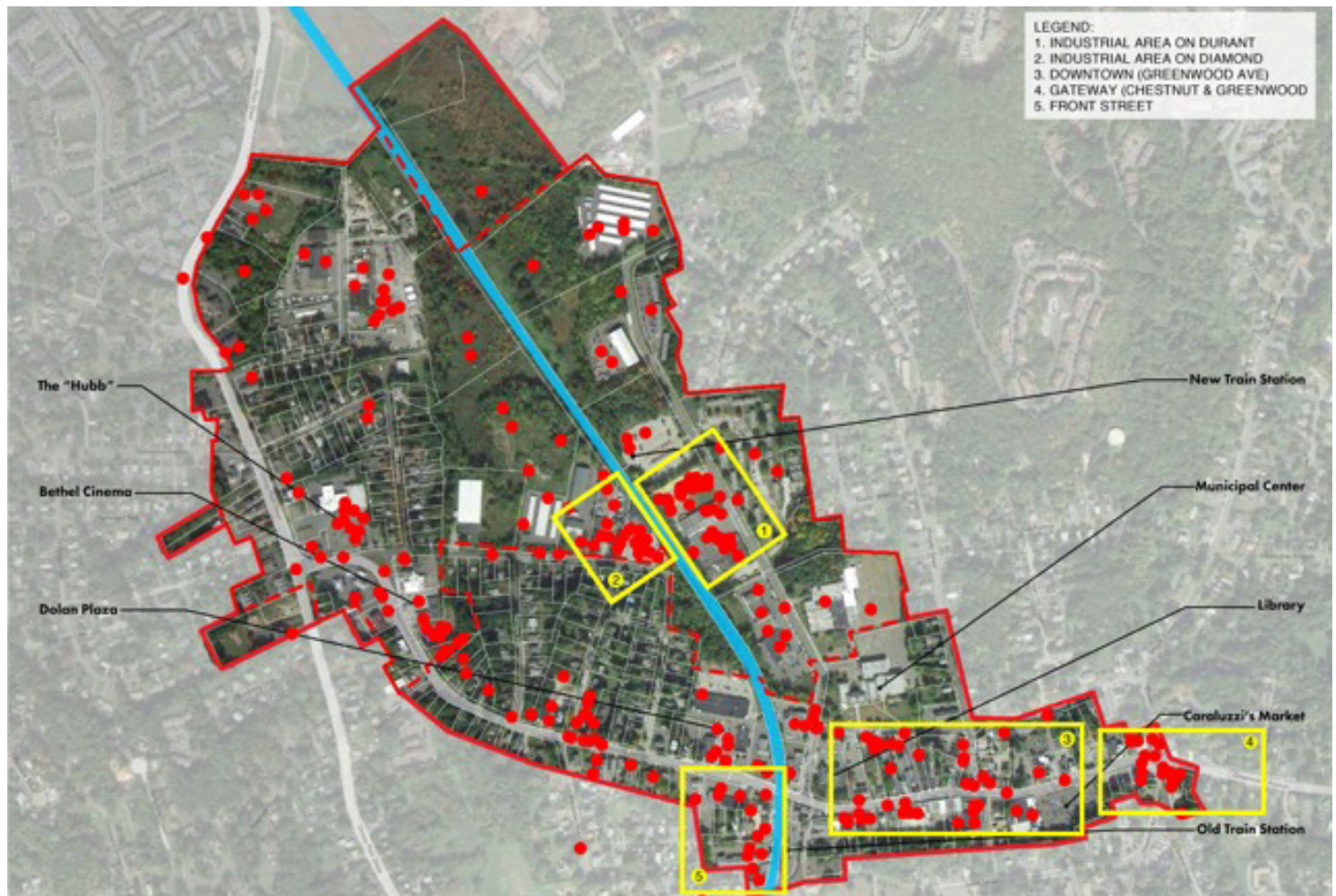
6. Bethel Cinema

The Cinema is a "cultural regional point of interest, that brings people from other areas" into Bethel. A host to "special events and community events."

COMMUNITY VOICES - SUMMARY REPORT

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

WEAK PLACES



This map shows all the weak places identified by participants. The characteristics of each place are described below synthesizing the participants' own words.

1. Industrial on Durant Avenue

Located next to the new train station this industrial area is marked by an “over crowded bus parking” that is “ugly and rundown with not enough green.” It is “not pedestrian friendly for people walking from the train to downtown.” It has “hazardous sidewalks” and cars “parking in front.”

2. Industrial on Diamond Avenue

Located on the west side of the railroad tracks the area is an “eye-sore from the train platform, not pedestrian friendly, and too close to residential streets.”

3. Greenwood Avenue

The weaknesses of Greenwood Avenue include:

- Too many empty stores and not enough varied retail
- Not enough cross walks for pedestrians
- Rents that are too high for local businesses
- Poor parking conditions on the School Street side

4. Gateway at Chestnut & Greenwood

A key gateway to downtown, the intersection of Chestnut Street and Greenwood avenue has:

- Vacant and rundown buildings
- Bad traffic flow
- Parking issues at the convenience store and dry cleaners

5. Front Street

Located opposite the Public Library front street has:

- Dilapidated and rundown buildings
- Bad sidewalks

The “proximity to the library and shops makes it visible.”

COMMUNITY VOICES - SUMMARY REPORT

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

STRONG & WEAK PLACES



This map shows the all strong and weak places. Significant overlap of conditions are evident where the green dots indicating strong places and the red dots indicating weak places cover parts of the same area. Strong examples of that are Greenwood Avenue, Dolan Plaza, and the area surrounding the Bethel Cinema.

OPPORTUNITIES

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The following ideas were collected in the Opportunities segment of the October 1, 2015 Community Voices workshop. They were used to identify preliminary goals for Bethel Forward.

The ideas in this report are reported verbatim. When necessary, compound ideas have been separated into individual components. Each idea is numbered. The first number indicates the table where the idea was collected. The second number identifies the idea.

The ideas have been sorted into topics and sub-topics and organized according to five categories:

- The Public Realm
- Transportation and Parking
- Retail, Restaurants and Other businesses, Arts and Events, and Marketing
- Transportation and Parking
- Government.

The topics are listed below with an indication of the number of ideas gathered for each.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| • The Public Realm: | 110 ideas |
| • Walk Bike: | 35 Ideas |
| • Open Space: | 24 Ideas |
| • Character: | 17 Ideas |
| • Housing: | 14 Ideas |
| • Development: | 13 Ideas |
| • Landscapes: | 7 Ideas |
| • Downtown Businesses, Art and Events, Marketing: | 43 ideas |
| • Retail, Restaurants, and Other Businesses: | 24 Ideas |
| • Arts And Events: | 12 Ideas |
| • Marketing: | 7 Ideas |
| • Transportation and Parking: | 40 ideas |
| • Transportation: | 20 Ideas |
| • Parking: | 20 Ideas |
| • Government: | 13 Ideas |
| • Environment: | 2 Ideas |

PRELIMINARY BROAD GOALS

The topic and subtopics provide insights in areas that are critical to the plan. They suggest a number of broad goals such as:

- Enhance the pedestrian friendly qualities of Bethel by improving sidewalks throughout, adding bike lanes and paths, using the wetlands for exercise trails and recreation, and connecting different parts of downtown.
- Create a major “community gathering” place as well as distinctive smaller open spaces.
- Maintain and enhance Bethel’s character, streetscapes, and visual appearance.
- Add downtown housing.
- Attract and strengthen retail, restaurants, and other businesses by leveraging Bethel’s arts and events and marketing the town’s unique assets.
- Improve the flow of traffic and parking.
- Address infrastructure and regulatory issues.

The goals were prioritized during the Community Choices workshop held on October 29.

CATEGORY – THE PUBLIC REALM

TOPIC – WALK BIKE: 35 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
2.04. Bike lanes for commuting from home to downtown especially train station.	Walk Bike	Bike
2.05. Change ordinance for bike racks, allow racks in parking lots by eliminating parking.	Walk Bike	Bike
10.10. Bike Lanes.	Walk Bike	Bike
5.01. Put clear emphasis on creating pedestrian friendly areas, one linked to the next, all through the downtown and Durant area and west side of tracks.	Walk Bike	Connect
8.07. Connect the Danbury/Bethel Inn on Grassy Plain St to the center of town by walking paths and boulevard type streets.	Walk Bike	Connect
9.16. Bridge “walking” over M-N RR @ Diamond (or North), connecting west downtown to east downtown.	Walk Bike	Connect
10.11. Better pedestrian crossings.	Walk Bike	Connect
3.07 Connected sidewalks throughout town.	Walk Bike	Connect
5.13. Greater access for foot traffic to and from the train station.	Walk Bike	Connect
13.10. Improved accessibility.	Walk Bike	Connect
3.01. Walkways, paths, pedestrian bridge from east side at train tracks to the west side near the new apartments that are being built.	Walk Bike	Connect
5.17 Re-designate School St to pedestrian only/re-pave with brick/cobblestone etc.	Walk Bike	Pedestrian
3.07. More accessibility. Making a pedestrian friendly environment. A train that is actually efficient.	Walk Bike	Pedestrian
9.20. People on the street + parking.	Walk Bike	Pedestrian
13.06 B. Develop the Greenway north of the train station as public outdoor recreational areas.	Walk Bike	Recreation
1.16. Raised walking paths and bike paths (separate) built over wetlands so people can stroll through these areas.	Walk Bike	Recreation
2.08. Accessibility to wetlands for walkways/bike paths or exercise trails.	Walk Bike	Recreation
7.01. Bike path (multi-use path) circling the TOD attracting people to downtown center. Bike Friendly Town.	Walk Bike	Recreation
7.15. Create more walkway and green space along wetlands.	Walk Bike	Recreation

OPPORTUNITIES

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

9.01. Nice access, wide bike/ walking paths, with recreation to downtown business district from all in town residential areas.	Walk Bike	Recreation
9.04. Make walkway throughout wetland.	Walk Bike	Recreation
9.12. Create walk ways.	Walk Bike	Recreation
9.18. Bike path - Greenway over wetlands.	Walk Bike	Recreation
3.07 Bike land/developing a trail, community oriented place to exercise off road.	Walk Bike	Recreation
9.09. Create a walkable downtown with bike paths, walkways thru the wetlands/greenways-a vibrant cohesive downtown community.	Walk Bike	Recreation
2.01. More and improved sidewalks.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
3.16. Connect all sidewalks in the area.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
4.13. Better sidewalks.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
5.10. Uniform sidewalks throughout TOD area.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
10.09. Sidewalks on School Street.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
13.08. New sidewalks on the Grassy Plain side of town.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
13.10 Pay attention to small details in sidewalk quality and curb cuts that can make downtown hard to walk around if you have mobility issues.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
13.10 Look into permeable concrete for sidewalk so curb less streets would work.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
7.08 Better sidewalks	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
8.02. Walkable area, larger/longer of a downtown that is inviting with great curb appeal.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks

TOPIC – OPEN SPACE: 24 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.14. Central gathering space (outdoors) for community events, that is similar to the Danbury Green. Reasonable size stage with covering and electric/lights and lawn for people to gather.	Open Space	Central
6.08. Some sort of centralized location that is the place from which all activity, events, art, gatherings occur...and a way to know what is happening.	Open Space	Central
8.03. Create a public area including gardens, sculpture to us as a centralized gathering place. Surrounded with businesses, restaurants, etc that is connected to existing downtown.	Open Space	Central
8.09. Green space and a community center. A space for all generations to gather for positives activities.	Open Space	Central
13.06. Creation of a central larger public park. Outdoor space to rival the great lawn in the educational park.	Open Space	Central
13.11. Destination park/splash pad similar to Dickinson Newtown or Rogues Park Danbury.	Open Space	Central
9.09 New large central recreational area for concerts and community events.	Open Space	Central
8.09 A community center with a pool, gym, walking paths, playground. Promotes town pride.	Open Space	Community center
8.14. Community Center	Open Space	Community center
13.07. I would like to see a recreation center in the proposed area of development to benefit residents of all ages. The center could include an outdoor bike path, an indoor track (great for the senior population) and a swimming pool. The town could charge for swimming lessons, gym membership, etc. Additionally there could be businesses located in the rec center such as a cafe.	Open Space	Community center
1.06. Close off all or part of PT Barnum Sq. to traffic.	Open Space	PT Barnum
5.09. Turn PT Barnum into large green, eliminate roads.	Open Space	PT Barnum
5.04. Small gazebo with seats in PT Barnum Square.	Open Space	Small

10.02. Have some pocket parks where people can sit, talk, relax and meet one another.	Open Space	Small
10.15. Small park like area to sit, meet, eat lunch, read, etc. Community garden.	Open Space	Small
5.08. Move building to Greenwood or use parking as park/green, seating in front of yellow brick building. Rector & Greenwood. Upgrade facade of building.	Open Space	Small
6.13. More nice parks, attractive areas. For example by the stream along the RR tracks by the railroad station and/or the stream between the post office and CVS.	Open Space	Small
6.02. Expand Town Hall lawn to other side of School Street. Ask owner to allow this. Close School Street. Make Town Hall lawn our "Town Square".	Open Space	Town hall area
6.14. Make a town square, perhaps where Municipal Center and School St area or by PT Barnum Sq.	Open Space	Town hall area
10.08. Enhance Municipal Center, renovate and make more accessible.	Open Space	Town hall area
13.05. Development of the municipal center area as a true town center. Bridging the downtown to the train.	Open Space	Town hall area
13.06 A. Expand municipal center open space.	Open Space	Town hall area
3.17. Make Mousey's Corner into downtown dog and people park.	Open Space	
9.07. Elizabeth Street parking/transit/play area.	Open Space	

TOPIC – CHARACTER: 17 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.08. Keep character of buildings.	Character	Buildings
1.09. No buildings more than 3 stories.	Character	Buildings
3.14 Don't want old Bethel houses to turn into Danbury.	Character	Buildings
12.02. One story round houses across from Post Office on School Street.	Character	Buildings
12.12 Consistent aesthetics with building design	Character	Buildings
7.17. Move all utilities to the back of the buildings on Greenwood Ave.	Character	Appearance
5.11. Uniform style for designated areas, not colors, not lettering.	Character	Appearance
8.05. Center zone (i.e. a more homogenous look).	Character	Appearance
8.13. The "look"/visual appearance of the buildings, keeping a historic feel.	Character	Appearance
12.10. Consistent look all along 302.	Character	Appearance
3.05. Bury downtown power lines. Visual pollution near Boylans & Greenwoods is very prevalent.	Character	Maintenance
3.14. Protect residential areas from noise, dirt, etc; when owners reside in historic homes they take better care of yards.	Character	Maintenance
7.05. Encourage owners to improve the exterior appearance of their buildings. Perhaps enlist boy/girl scout clubs to paint buildings or plant shrubs and flowers around these structures.	Character	Maintenance
7.08 Proper building maintenance	Character	Maintenance
7.07. Restrict new construction to maintain existing style of construction on each street.	Character	Regulations
7.09. Have architectural zoning requirements (build structures that are made to last and look good). Not that crummy, temporary big box look.	Character	Regulations
9.13. Removing "unattractive" buildings, factories, unused land.	Character	Regulations

OPPORTUNITIES

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

TOPIC – HOUSING: 14 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
8.06. Bring more people to downtown. If more people live here, the business will follow.	Housing	
12.13. Encourage young professionals not families.	Housing	
4.03. Affordable housing for 55+ and older. Rentals or Condos.	Housing	
5.12. More residential development to help support and grow the downtown commerce vitality.	Housing	
5.16. Developing more opportunities to live downtown	Housing	
6.01. More housing downtown.	Housing	
6.10. More affordable housing. Mixed housing choices.	Housing	
7.13. Affordable rental housing. Fix sidewalks all over TOD area.	Housing	
9.02. Flood the downtown area with new residential homes to supply the business district with customers to highly utilize the millennial tendencies to use the train.	Housing	
9.03. Durant Ave, convert to housing not commercial.	Housing	
9.06. Housing. No new commercial, but need to do a study on how much is needed.	Housing	
9.14. Housing for younger families. So there is more activity and people.	Housing	
13.03. Increased commuter housing and parking.	Housing	
13.07 I do not want to see more residential development as I am concerned about traffic and parking.	Housing	

TOPIC – DEVELOPMENT: 13 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
3.09. Integrate strong points such as Greenwoods to the Green into more of the continuous corridor. It needs flow from one building to another, where the architecture and feel are similar.	Develop	
3.11. Move the police station to Durant Ave. and get rid of the school bus storage.	Develop	
6.03. No industrial development downtown.	Develop	
7.16. Buy stores - Leave as is but restore building.	Develop	
8.04. Redevelopment of rundown buildings and vacant properties following guidelines for the village.	Develop	
8.10. Tear down 11 Durant Ave and build apartments.	Develop	
1.20. Create incentives for businesses to want to move into town. In turn create competition among business owners. Tax breaks to property owners to pass on to new and/or struggling businesses.	Develop	
3.10. Developing Verdi's Woodworking into a restaurant or civic center or performing arts.	Develop	
5.19. Expand existing village district into part of the TOD area possibly.	Develop	
8.11. Develop eastern edge of Greenwood Ave.	Develop	
10.12. Revamp old factory near old train station. Make it an antique co-op, an art co-op or small boutique stores/shops.	Develop	
6.04. Allow more flexibility in land use.	Develop	
12.12. Commercial development only. Conserve open space. Walkability. .	Develop	

TOPIC – LANDSCAPES: 7 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
7.06. Create streetscape.	Landscapes	
7.08. More trees	Landscapes	
7.10. Extend streetscaping to Dolan Plaza and opposite strip mall to camouflage parking lots and create pleasant link to Victorian row.	Landscapes	
7.11. Trees on Durant Ave and sidewalk improvement. Also down to Caraluzzi's.	Landscapes	
10.01. Re-tree the downtown with smaller tougher trees that can withstand climate change.	Landscapes	
1.19. Extend street scaping / sidewalk past Dolan Plaza on both sides and landscape the hill across from Opera House/Putnam House on the side of the Bethel Cycle parking lot.	Landscapes	
9.19. Street scape extended.	Landscapes	

CATEGORY – DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES, ART AND EVENTS, AND MARKETING

TOPIC – RETAIL, RESTAURANTS, AND OTHER BUSINESSES: 24 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.17. Brand Stores! LL Bean, Home Goods, Starbucks, GAP, Shoe Store, adult & child new clothing store.	Retail	Anchor
7.02. Trader Joe's or Fresh Market, a destination store to bring people from out of town.	Retail	Anchor
10.03. Get in a big magnet store like Old Navy where people can shop for clothes.	Retail	Anchor
12.08. Large retail stores for clothing store.	Retail	Anchor
13.01. Anchor store to attract people to downtown.	Retail	Anchor
4.06. More diverse establishments with shopping and performing arts.	Retail	Diversify
10.05. We have too many pizza places in town but there is not a Mexican restaurant. Would love to have art supplies available.	Retail	Diversify
10.14. More diversity. More restaurants and shops.	Retail	Diversify
7.04 Tax incentives should be offered, personal property tax waivers.	Retail	Incentives
10.04. Incentives perhaps to attract small business to the many available spaces on Greenwood Ave. Our primary street looks deserted.	Retail	Incentives
1.20 Create incentives for businesses to expand hours.	Retail	
8.01 Create and encourage more retail opportunities.	Retail	
13.12. Clothing store, picnic table, garbage cans. Option for a place to leash dog to enter a store?	Retail	
1.24. Bed & Breakfast and places for visitors to stay that are in keeping with local character.	Retail	
5.02. Offer counseling to potential business owners to help determine if their business plan can succeed. Too many new business open, have no customer base, and close quickly.	Retail	
5.15. Enhance what draws people to downtown and providing economic opportunity.	Retail	
5.18. Somehow attract more businesses to stay longer. We have a constant turnover in the downtown area.	Retail	
7.04. Fill in the empty store fronts with businesses, preferably selling goods that will attract buyers. Parking will need to be improved to facilitate this.	Retail	
9.05. Understand that services maybe realistic to downtown. Income of Bethel, different clientele than retail.	Retail	
8.08. The downtown needs more sustainable retail that keeps with the charming New England feel we currently have.	Retail	
1.03. More stores for men's and women's shoes.	Retail	
2.07. Beer Garden near downtown.	Retail	

OPPORTUNITIES

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

4.07. Apparel shops for men, women (Talbots), children. Speciality shops- e.g. sports, gold	Retail
4.09. Health food store for downtown.	Retail
4.11. Encourage restaurants as a destination for fine eating or family eating.	Retail
6.06. Keep stores open later at night.	Retail
6.11. Industry out, fill up stores.	Retail
7.03. More Dr. Mike's out to the front of a building in downtown center.	Retail
7.14. Attract businesses that will bring Bethelites and others into Bethel.	Retail
13.04. Increased Retail.	Retail

TOPIC – ARTS AND EVENTS: 12 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.15 Outdoor sculptures in the park areas all along walking paths.	Art & Events	Arts
1.15. More art/music/theater in Bethel.	Art & Events	Arts
4.08. Live theatre performances.	Art & Events	Arts
1.15 “Music Nights” where people bring instruments and play together.	Art & Events	Arts
1.23. Highlight the strong ARTS - music, visual, etc. There is live music almost every night in Bethel but so few people know.	Art & Events	Arts
2.06. A weekly program on the green in front of town hall.	Art & Events	Arts
3.04. Need a real banner to announce events. Have great events and no way to advertise them. Banner in downtown, centralized marketing/recreation plan. People can't come if they don't know about events.	Art & Events	Events
10.13. Farmers market on Sundays. Food truck night, add to summer events.	Art & Events	Events
1.02. Major Unnamed Bethel Festival. Close the center of Bethel to traffic and use all the space to host a major festival/event.	Art & Events	Events
12.07. An arts venue.	Art & Events	Facilities
12.14. Cultural Center/Arts/Music/Performing Arts Center.	Art & Events	Facilities
12.05. Venue in downtown to attract people.	Art & Events	Facilities

TOPIC – MARKETING: 7 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.18. Make Bethel a destination for weekenders. Need downtown accommodations (we have the restaurants) “Come to Bethel for the Weekend”	Marketing	
1.01. Create a focus for Bethel. Bethel needs a theme, something that it is known for that will attract people to downtown -e.g. Hay-on-Wye = Used books	Marketing	
1.05. Give people a reason to come to downtown Bethel so they will shop and go to restaurants.	Marketing	
1.10. We need a creative, comprehensive P.R. campaign to encourage people to come and spend money downtown, otherwise, no businesses will thrive.	Marketing	
1.22. A PR campaign to celebrate Bethel's local entrepreneurship - different from Greenwich, Westport, New Canaan and Kent	Marketing	
8.01. Beautiful town. Feature our town in local newspapers and Shelter magazine.	Marketing	
12.11. Something unique to draw people to Bethel.	Marketing	

CATEGORY – TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

TOPIC – TRANSPORTATION: 20 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
4.05. Better traffic flow with parking.	Transport	Flow
4.14. Make better traffic flow.	Transport	Flow
9.09 Make Greenwood drive only, no street parking.	Transport	Flow
1.21. Bus station - list of businesses and direction to access (a directory at station). Trolley around town to access businesses. Collaboration between elected officials, business owners, and property owners.	Transport	Public
3.02. Bethel needs better public transportation. More buses. Taxis that are safe and can transport a disabled veteran and his wheel chair.	Transport	Public
1.12. Trolley car to go around town.	Transport	Public
1.13. Bus shelters.	Transport	Public
6.12. Have a downtown trolley and get as much parking off streets and into lots as possible. Charge for the parking as needed but make the trolley hop on, hop off and free.	Transport	Public
8.12. Capitalize on our beautiful train station, using it as a means for accessibility and a destination point.	Transport	Train
9.10. Electrify RR for a quicker/easier ride. Expand the schedule to NYC.	Transport	Train
9.17. Electrification of Metro North.	Transport	Train
3.13. Creative ideas for rush hour traffic congestion.	Transport	
4.02. Open up town hall parking lot to drive thru.	Transport	
4.10. Fix the roads.	Transport	
4.12. Fix roads.	Transport	
9.08. Grand/Durant connection.	Transport	
10.07. Improve access in/out of Dolan Plaza.	Transport	
13.02. Traffic relief for Greenwood Ave.	Transport	
1.04. Signage for direction.	Transport	
5.07. Greenwood Ave. car free from Caraluzzi's to Library and Depot Place including Barnum Square (add fountain). East bound traffic via south street. West bound traffic via main street & school street. Parking south side of school street.	Transport	

TOPIC – PARKING: 20 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
5.05. Parking on School Street.	Parking	School Street
5.17. Reconfigure existing parking areas in downtown. Prime example is on School St facing Municipal Center. Opposite side of street could be green space to connect to muni center lawn.	Parking	School Street
12.06. Unified and level parking on School Street.	Parking	School Street
12.04. Limit street parking. Get off street parking. We sell Bethel cheap.	Parking	
1.07. Need more downtown parking.	Parking	
5.14. More parking.	Parking	
6.05. Improve parking/reduce traffic (trucks) down Greenwood Ave.	Parking	
6.07. Better parking.	Parking	
9.11. More parking.	Parking	

OPPORTUNITIES

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

9.15. Downtown parking.	Parking
10.06. Remove parking on Greenwood.	Parking
12.01. Eliminate dangerous parking from St. Thomas Church to Barnum Square.	Parking
12.03. Parking and new sidewalk.	Parking
12.15. Parking and addressing traffic issues.	Parking
3.15. Connect the parking lots and put up signs showing where they are.	Parking
4.01. Put up parking lot signs.	Parking
13.09. Better signage and sight lines to make downtown easier and safer to navigate. Better signage for off street parking. Removal of selected parallel spots that hide cross walks.	Parking
2.02. Expand train station parking.	Parking
3.18. Tie parking lots together. Town could do easement and accepting liability.	Parking
6.09. Development of the upper end of Maine Street, primarily parking, to improve access to museum, historic sites and church.	Parking

CATEGORY – GOVERNMENT

TOPIC – GOVERNMENT: 13 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
7.12. Sell water to Danbury in return for more sewer capacity.	Govern	Infrastruct
12.09. New update infrastructure.	Govern	Infrastruct
3.08. Maintenance. Maintenance of sidewalks in winter. renovating/up dating blighted properties.	Govern	Maintenance
3.08. Cleaning up trash, more trash cans/recycling bins.	Govern	Maintenance
5.03. Recycling receptacles next to garbage receptacles in downtown area. Slot for paper and slot of plastics/glass.	Govern	Maintenance
3.03. Enforce ordinances. The sidewalk maintenance in Bethel in winter is abysmal, ice & snow everywhere. Very dangerous.	Govern	Maintenance
3.06. Enforce blight ordinance. Burned house on Blackman is an eyesore. Understand it is historic but it has been too long and sets a precedence.	Govern	Regulations
3.08. Enforcing existing ordinances.	Govern	Regulations
3.12. Condemn and teardown abandoned buildings.	Govern	Regulations
7.18. Create enforceable sign regulations.	Govern	Regulations
4.04. Lower taxes for seniors. Including those already offered.	Govern	Taxes
5.06. Lower taxes on commercial property so landlords can charge lower rents.	Govern	Taxes
1.11. Town leaders to use our tax dollars to better maintain, clean, trim, etc the downtown area.	Govern	Taxes

TOPIC – ENVIRONMENT: 2 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
3.19. Check wetlands. 100 year flood plain.	Environ	
2.03. Solar-powered charging stations.	Environ	

EXIT SURVEY RESULTS

Were you comfortable working in tonight's small group?	Percent
Yes	99%
No	1%
Total	
Were you exposed to new ideas and concerns?	Percent
Yes	86%
No	14%
Total	
Was the workshop...	Percent
Too long	3%
Too short	1%
About right	96%
Total	
Will you continue participate in the vision process?	Percent
Yes	100%
No	0%
Total	
You are...	Percent
Female	55%
Male	45%
Total	
What is your age?	Percent
14 years and under	0%
15-19 years	0%
20-24 years	0%
25-34 years	0%
35-44 years	19%
45-54 years	27%
55-64 years	19%
65-74 years	24%
75 years or older	11%
Total	
What is your highest level of education?	Percent
Less than high school diploma	0%
High school diploma	9%
Some college (no degree)	11%
College graduate (Associate or Bachelor's Degree)	41%
.Masters Degree or Ph.D	39%
Total	
Where do you live?	Percent
In Bethel	94%
Outside of Bethel	6%
Total	

If you live outside of Bethel, where do you live?	
Newtown, New Fairfield, New Milford, Hickcock Avenue.	
How long have you been living in Bethel?	Percent
0-4 years	2%
5-9 years	11%
10-19 years	35%
20-29 years	13%
30-39 years	19%
40-49 years	16%
50 years or more	3%
Not Applicable	0
Total	
Do you work in Bethel?	Percent
yes	37%
no	35%
Retired	28%
total	
Do you own a business in Bethel?	Percent
yes	16%
no	84%
total	
Annual Household Income	Percent
Less than \$20,000	2%
\$20,000 to \$39,000	8%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	9%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	15%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	11%
\$100,000 or more	55%
Total	



So, what's next?

Community Choices

October 29, 2015

Presentation & Discussion: 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

Meeting Location: General Purpose Room, Clifford J. Hurgin
Municipal Center, 1 School Street, Bethel.

Community Choices is the second public meeting of BETHEL FORWARD. You will review findings from the first meeting and evaluate how they measure up against current land use and economic conditions. Working in small groups, you will refine and prioritize a shared vision of downtown Bethel that will become the foundation of the BETHEL FORWARD plan.

For more information visit: www.bethel-ct.gov

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

OVERVIEW

The Community Choices workshop took place on October 29, 2015. It was the second public meeting of the Bethel Forward community engagement process.

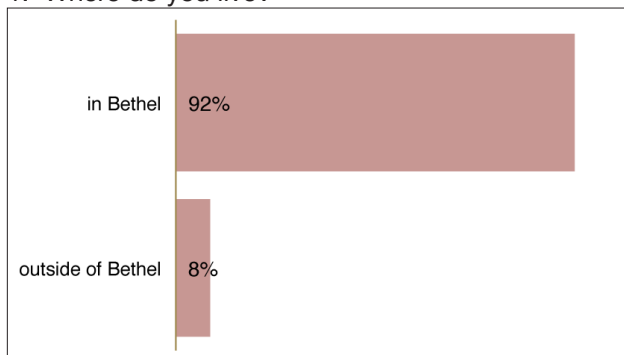
Community Choices consisted of presentations followed by electronic keypad polling of participants. Presentations included:

- Report on the Community Voices workshop
- Report on economic findings
- Land use observations
- Overview of infrastructure findings

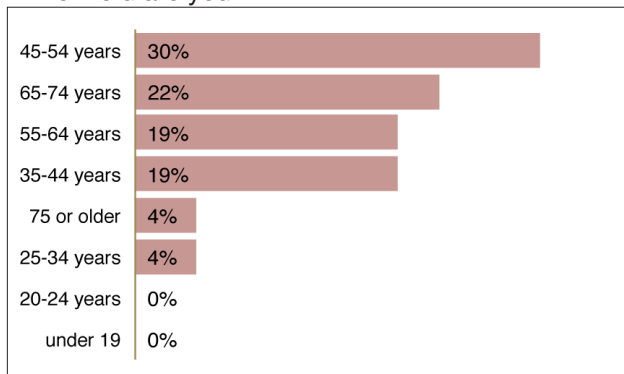
This report includes summaries of the interactive sessions. A total of 82 participants were polled. Raw data from this activity is available on line at: <http://www.bethel-ct.gov/content/117/8612/11809.aspx>.

A. PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

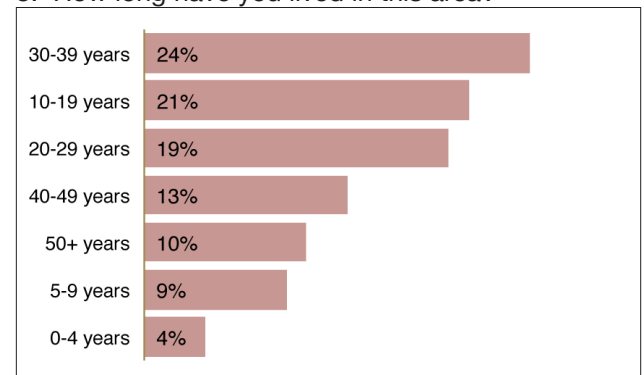
1. Where do you live?



2. How old are you?



3. How long have you lived in this area?

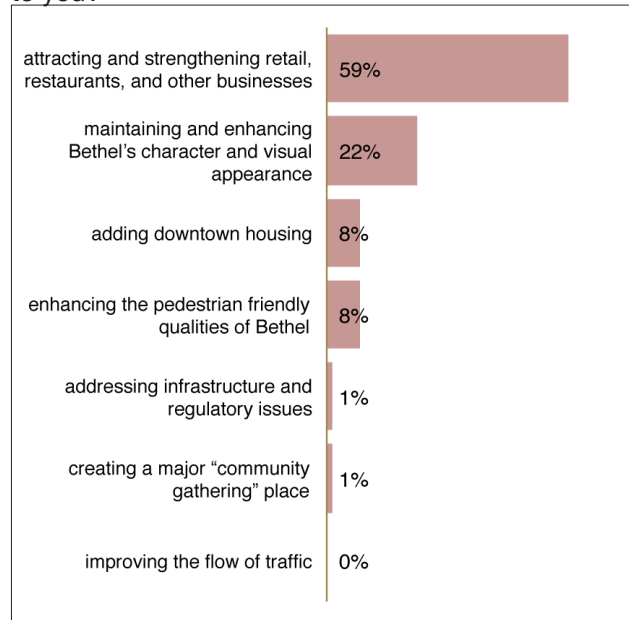


COMMUNITY CHOICES

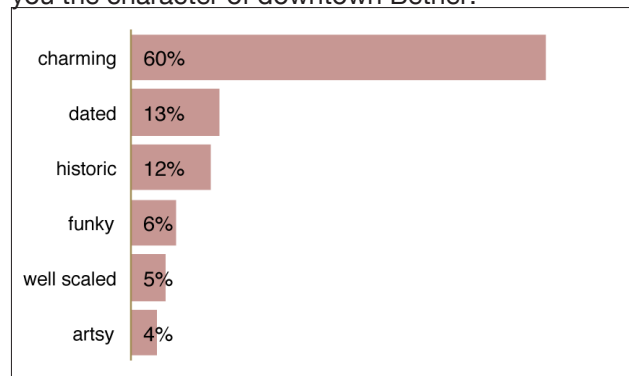
LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

B. COMMUNITY VOICES PRIORITIES

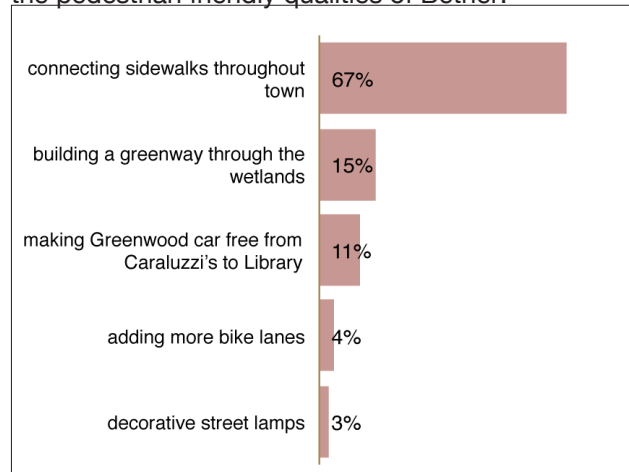
4. Which of the following goals is more important to you?



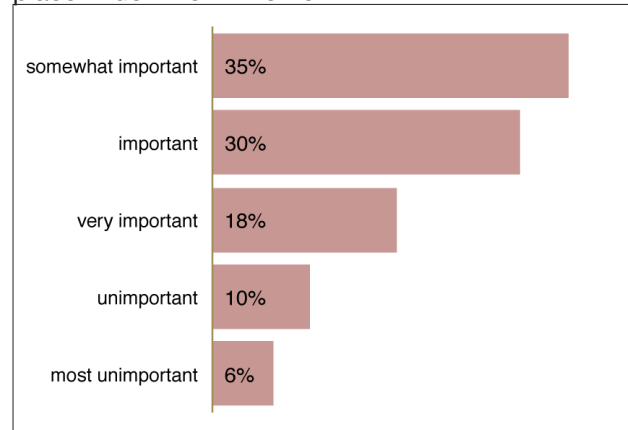
5. Which of the following words best describes for you the character of downtown Bethel?



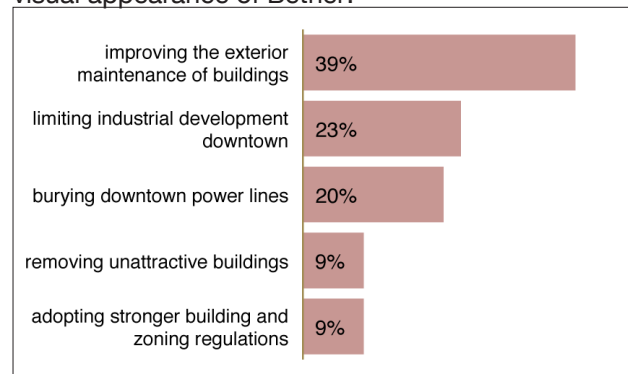
6. Which of the following steps would most enhance the pedestrian friendly qualities of Bethel?



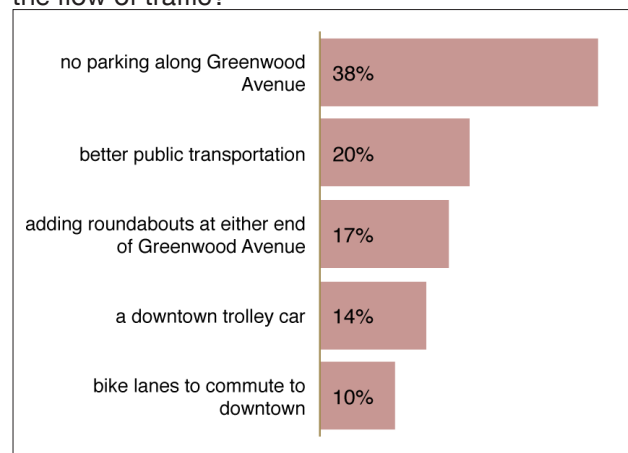
7. How important it is to create a major gathering place in downtown Bethel?



8. Which of these actions will better enhance the visual appearance of Bethel?

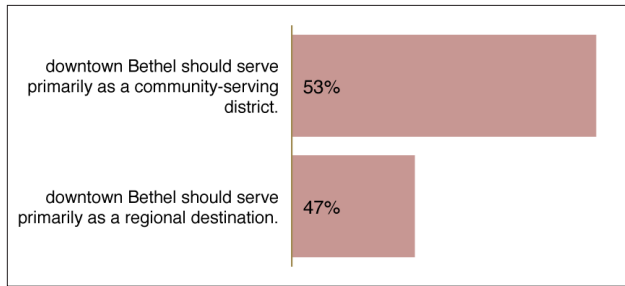


9. Which of the following items would most improve the flow of traffic?

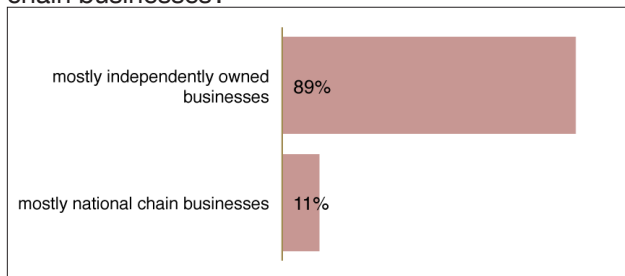


C. REPORT ON ECONOMIC FINDINGS

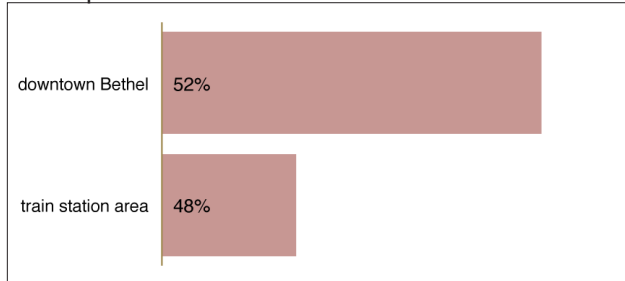
10. Which of these two options would you prefer?



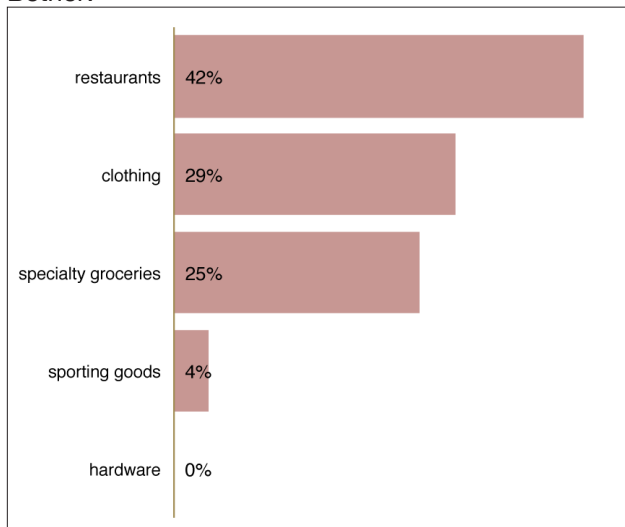
11. Would you prefer downtown Bethel to have more independently owned businesses or national chain businesses?



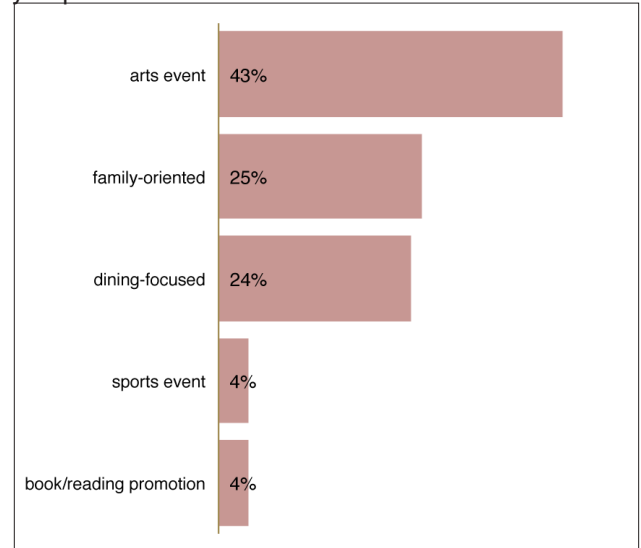
12. Which would be the better choice for the development of new restaurants and entertainment?



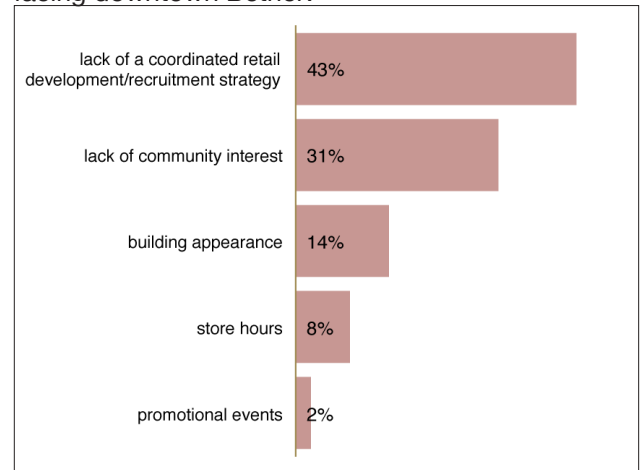
13. Which of the following types of retail businesses would you most like to see added to downtown Bethel?



14. What type of new festival or special event would you prefer downtown?

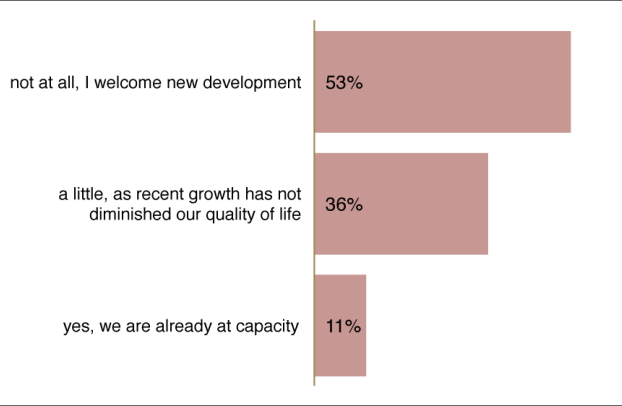


15. Of these issues, which is the biggest problem facing downtown Bethel?

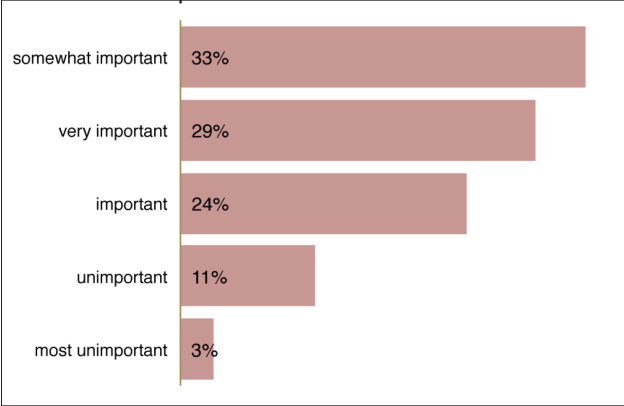


D. LAND USE OBSERVATIONS

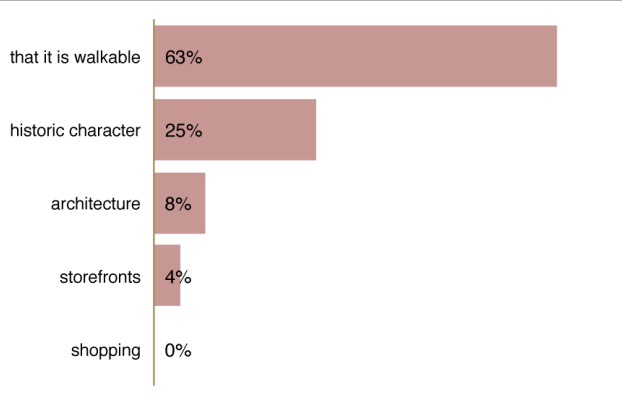
16. Do you fear additional growth or development in Bethel?



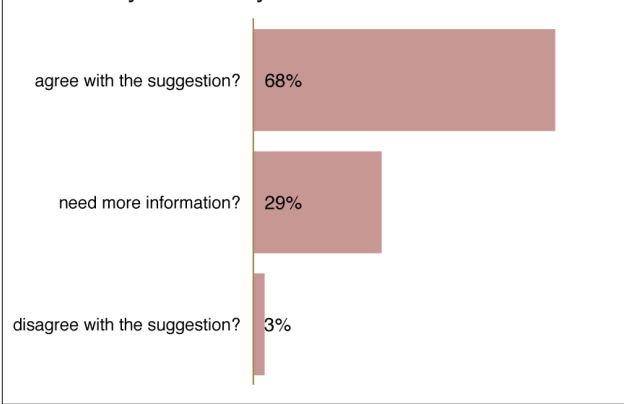
19. How important it is to introduce makerspace facilities in the plan?



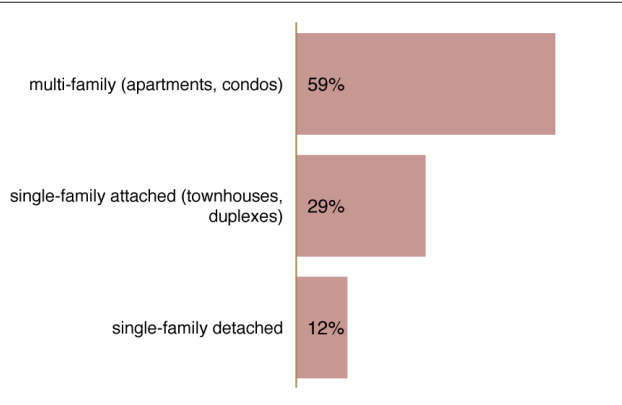
17. What do you like most about Greenwood Avenue?



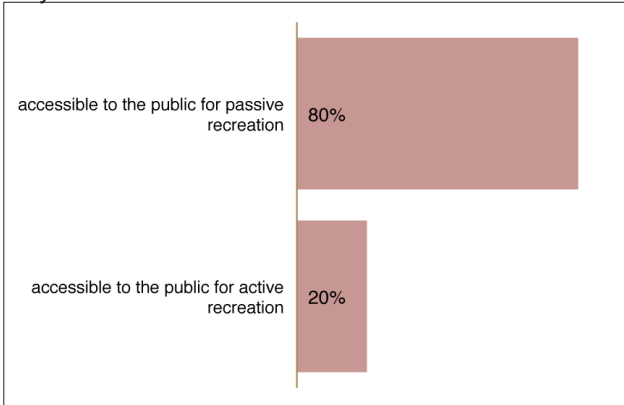
20. Your ideas suggested that the plan should preserve as a public amenity the extensive wetlands in the study area. Do you:



18. What type of housing is most needed in downtown?

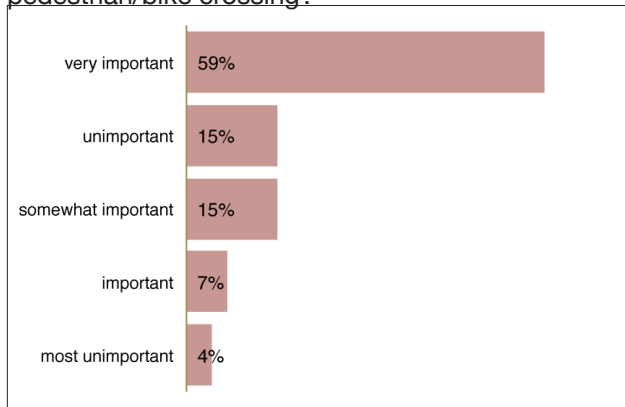


21. If we were to make the wetland public should they be:

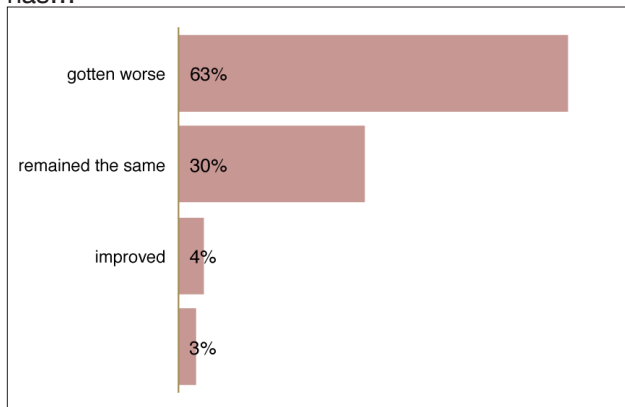


E. OVERVIEW OF INFRASTRUCTURE FINDINGS

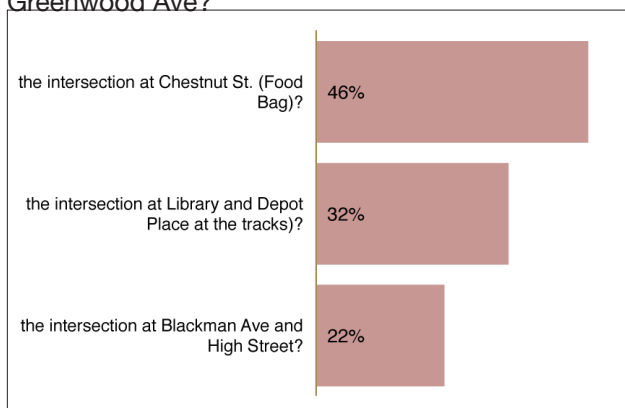
22. How important is it to connect the east and west sides of the tracks AT or near the train station with a pedestrian/bike crossing?



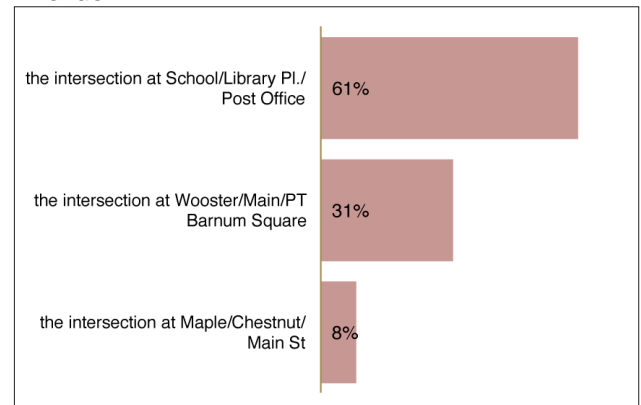
23. In the past five years, traffic in the town center has...



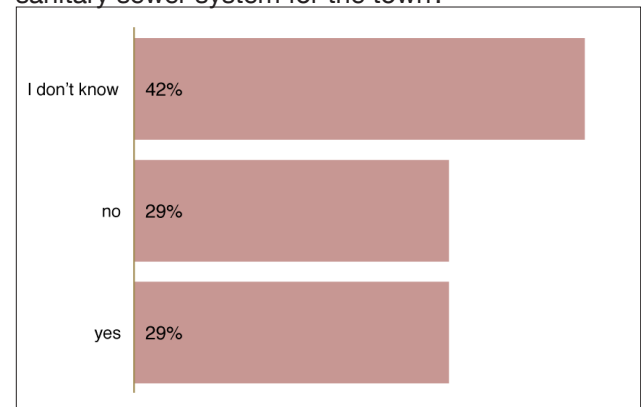
24. Which is the most problematic intersection on Greenwood Ave?



25. Which is the most problematic of the following downtown intersections not on Greenwood Avenue?



26. Do you feel development is limited by the sanitary sewer system for the town?





interactive collaborative vision design hands-on informed open to the public
CHARRETTE
so, let's do it! help shape the future of downtown creative

The Bethel Charrette is a four-day long work session where planners, designers, architects and the public work together to take the public's ideas and develop illustrations and architectural designs that will be used to define the vision and plan for downtown Bethel.

The Charrette is open to the public. Residents are encouraged to participate in the development of the plan by dropping in and attending two scheduled presentations the week of November 16th.

Drop-ins: 10 AM to 6 PM Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

Public Meetings: Tuesday, November 17
and Thursday, November 19 at 7 PM

Where: General Purpose Room, Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street, Bethel

For a more comprehensive schedule visit: www.bethel-ct.gov

CHARRETTE SCHEDULE

The DPZ Team will be holding a public charrette from November 16 - 20 at the Town of Bethel. The studio will be open daily from 10 am to 6 pm, with topic-specific meetings held as indicated. Additionally two evening public presentations, summarizing the results and designs of the week will be held on November 17 and 19 as indicated.

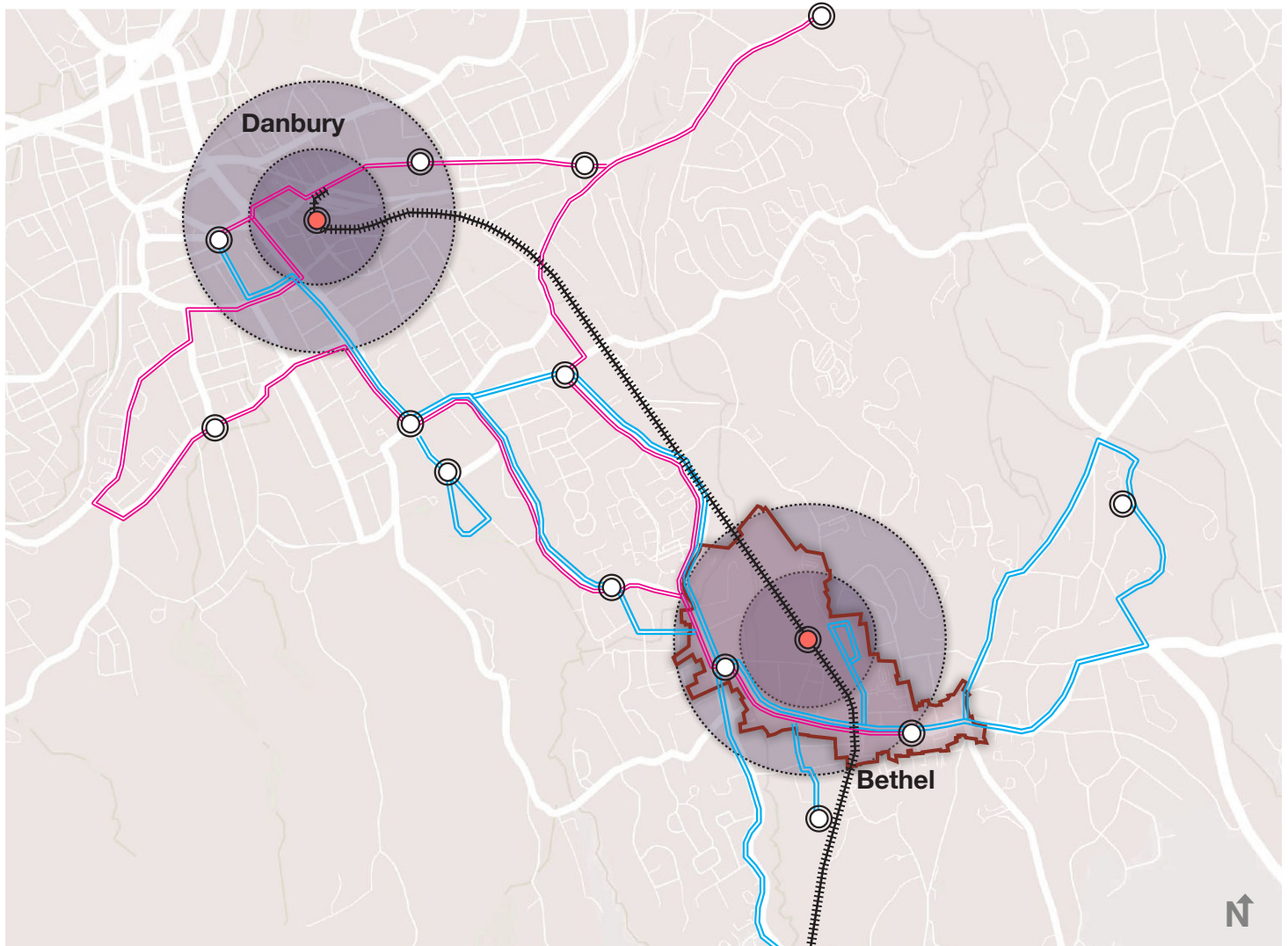
	Monday November 16, 2015	Tuesday November 17, 2015	Wednesday November 18, 2015	Thursday November 19, 2015	Friday November 20, 2015
8:00 am	Team Travel	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
9:00 am		DPZ Team Briefing	DPZ Team Briefing	DPZ Team Briefing	DPZ Team Briefing
10:00 am	Set-Up Studio	TOD Area Property Owners Meeting	Architects, Builders & Engineers Meeting	Design / Production	Client Team Meeting #2: Next Steps / Path Forward
11:00 am	Site Tour Group 1				Design
Noon	Client Project Briefing	DPZ Team departs			
1:00 pm	Site Tour Group 2		Lunch in	Lunch in	Lunch in
2:00 pm			Design	Community Groups Meeting	Design / Production
3:00 pm	CTDOT Transportation Meeting				
4:00 pm					
5:00 pm	Design Session				
6:00 pm	Commission & Board Meeting				
7:00 pm	Advisory Committee & City Staff Meeting		Opening Presentation	Client / DPZ Progress Review	Final Charrette Presentation
8:00 pm				Dinner in	
9:00 pm	Dinner out		Dinner out	Design / Production	Dinner out

A detailed map showing a residential area with a network of streets, building footprints, and green spaces. A prominent red line traces a path through the area, possibly indicating a proposed development or boundary. A large blue area in the upper left represents a body of water. The text 'PRELIMINARY SITE ANALYSIS' is overlaid in the center-right.

PRELIMINARY SITE ANALYSIS

The following section illustrates existing conditions on the ground, documenting constraints and opportunities within the study area. These include: Rights-of-ways, streets, plots, existing buildings, regional access, connectivity, zoning, etc.

LOCAL TRANSIT ROUTES

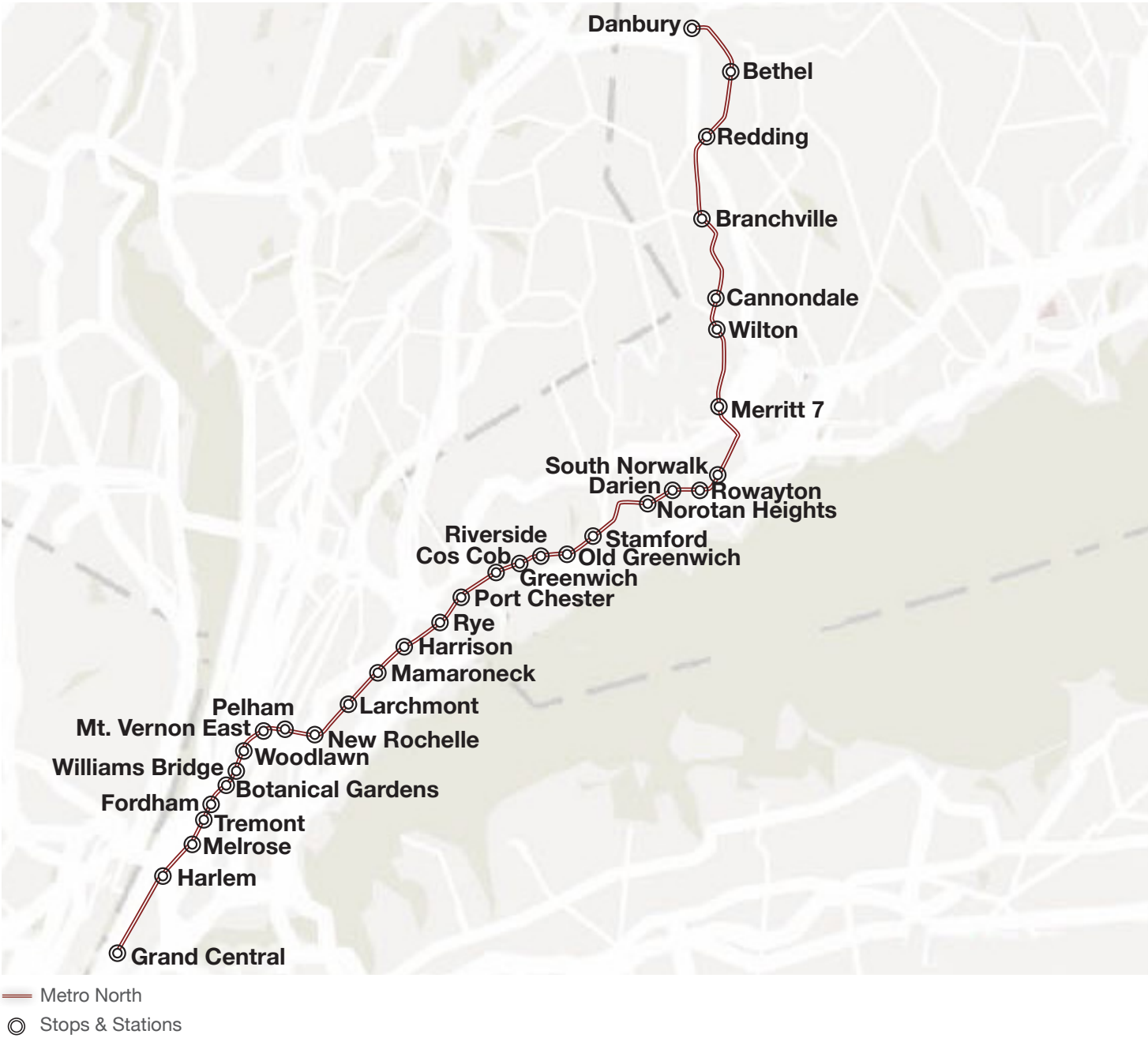


- Bethel Center Bus Route
- Newtown Road-Bethel Loop
- Metro North
- Stops & Stations
- Study Area Boundary
- Pedestrian & TOD sheds
(1/4 mile & 1/2 radii)

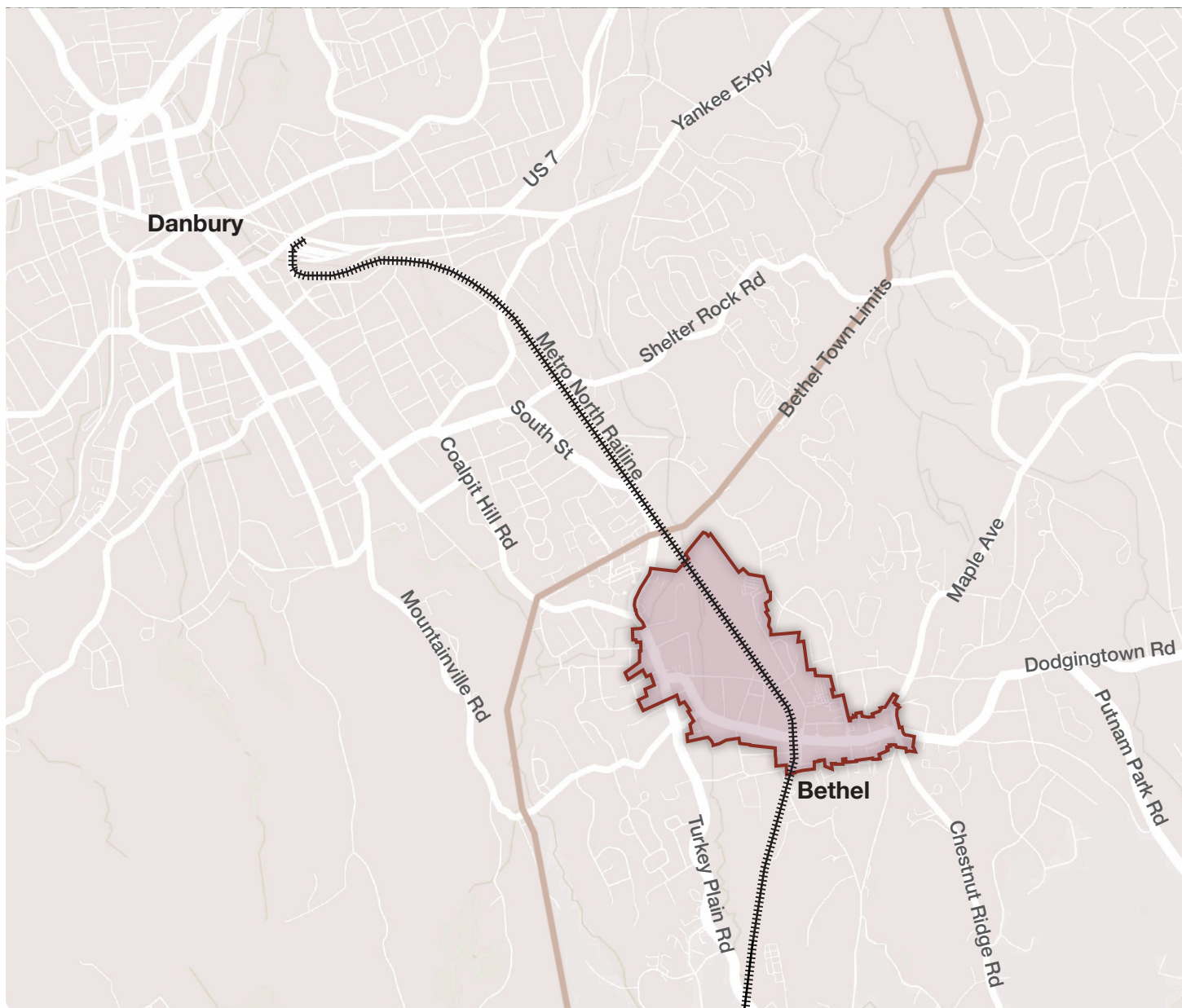
Preliminary statistics:

Distance between Bethel & Danbury: 2.5 miles
Site Area: 268 acres

METRO NORTH REGION



REGIONAL AERIAL



- Metro North
- Study Area Boundary

LOCAL SITE CONTEXT
PRELIMINARY SITE ANALYSIS

ORIGINAL TOD BOUNDARY



EXPANDED BOUNDARY



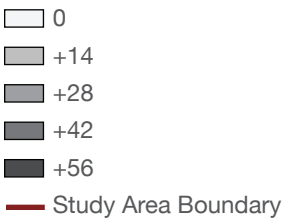
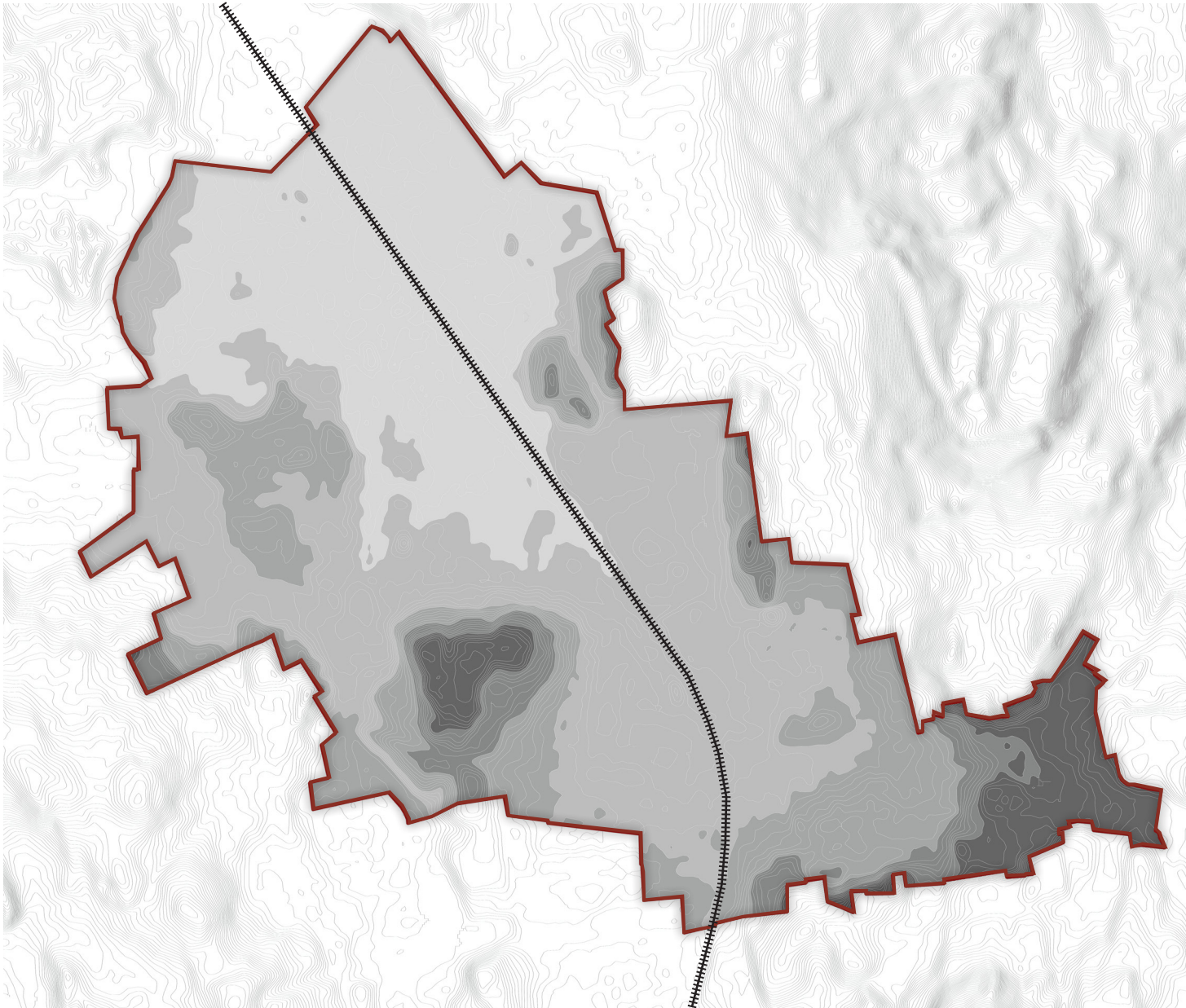
The boundary for the study area was significantly expanded (175%), to include the entire downtown.

LOCAL SITE CONTEXT
PRELIMINARY SITE ANALYSIS

EXISTING BUILDINGS



TOPOGRAPHY





EXISTING STREET NETWORK



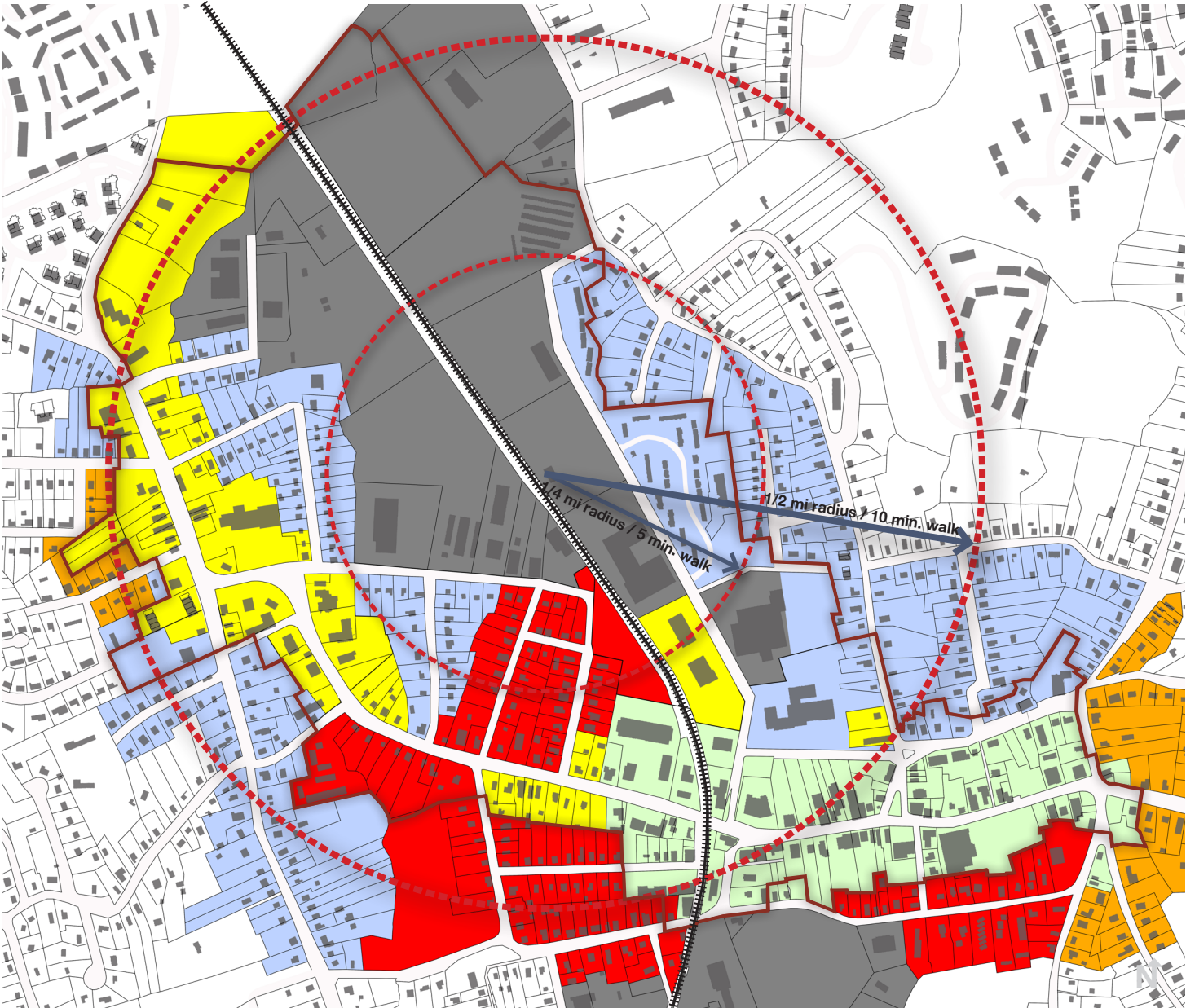
- Existing Streets
- Study Area Boundary

EXISTING SURFACE PARKING



-  Parking Lots
-  Study Area Boundary

ZONING & NEIGHBORHOOD STRUCTURE



- R-10 (Residential 10,000 sf)
- RR-10 (Multi-Family Residential)
- RMO (Professional Office)
- C (Commercial)
- VC (Village Center)
- I (Industrial)

Pedestrian & TOD Sheds
(5 min. & 10 min. walk)

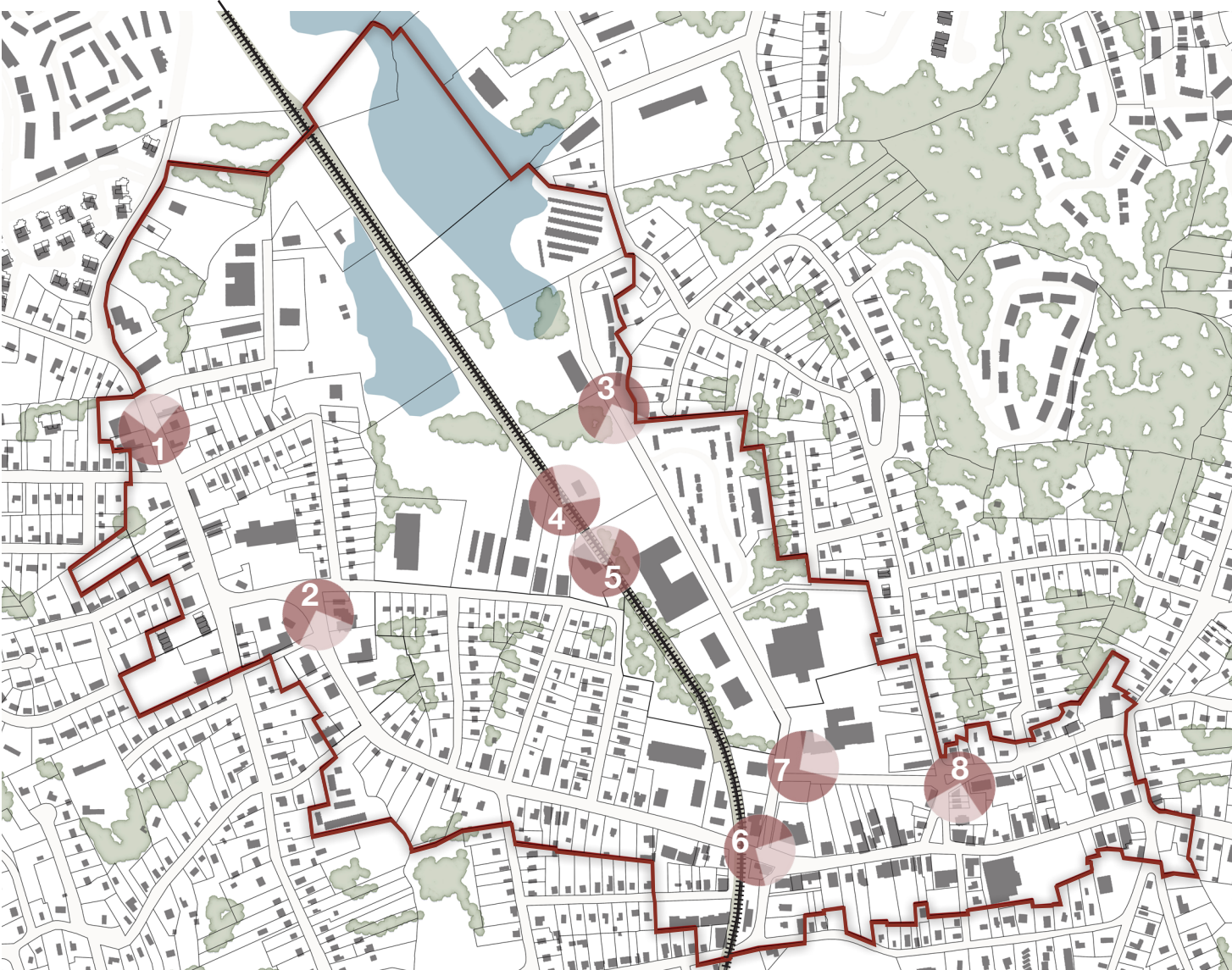
Neighborhood size is determined not by population, but by an area where in the majority of the residents are likely to walk to a neighborhood square or center, which could contain a corner store and a bus stop. The size is based upon 1/4 mile radii, which represents the five-minute walk that a majority of people will choose to walk before deciding to drive. This site offers the benefit of providing access to many different uses, including transit which is within the typical TOD shed of 1/2 mile (10-minute walk) from the downtown.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



- Wetlands
- Tree line
- Study Area Boundary

SITE PHOTOS
PRELIMINARY SITE ANALYSIS



1. Grassy Plain St & Willow St



2. Greenwood Ave



3. Durant Ave near Bethel Station



4. Bethel Station



5. Metro North Line



6. Greenwood Ave across from the library



7. Municipal Center



8. PT Barnum Square

SCALE COMPARISONS
PRELIMINARY SITE ANALYSIS



MERIDEN, CT



MILFORD, CT



SCALE COMPARISONS
PRELIMINARY SITE ANALYSIS



INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS



FIELD RECONNAISSANCE



Draft Field Reconnaissance Memorandum

To: File

From: Andrew R. Poyant, PWS

Date: November 6, 2015

Subject: Transit Oriented Development, Bethel, CT

On October 15, 2015, CDM Smith Soil Scientist Andrew Poyant conducted field reconnaissance in Bethel, CT within the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) study area. The purpose was to document state and federal wetland resource areas within the study area to assist in the development of a TOD for downtown Bethel, CT. The results from the field reconnaissance are presented below.

Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) Soil Survey

The NRCS soil survey for the study area was examined prior to field reconnaissance. Depth to water table, drainage class, flooding frequency class, ponding frequency class, and hydric soil ratings were examined for each soil unit in the study area. Raypol silt loam (12), Timakwa and Natchaug soils (17), Catden and Freetown soils (18), and Saco silt loam (108) are soil map units within the study area that consist of a high percentage of soil series that exhibit hydric soil characteristics, see Soil Map Figure. These hydric soils are predominately located on the undeveloped parcels in the northern portion of the study area and are associated with Sympaug Brook.

Field Reconnaissance

The TOD study area was walked to determine the accuracy of the soil survey. The NRCS soil surveys are used to provide information as a planning tool and often needs to be adjusted with an onsite investigation.

Sympaug Brook Wetlands

The northern portion of the TOD study area is a large wetland associated with Sympaug Brook and a tributary to Sympaug Brook. A Palustrine emergent (PEM) wetland dominated by broadleaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*) and common reed (*Phragmites australis*) borders Sympaug Brook and its tributary. The PEM soils are mapped as Timakwa and Natchaug soils, Catden and Freetown soils, and Saco silt loam. Up-gradient of the PEM is a Palustrine forested wetland dominated by broad-leaved deciduous trees (PFO1). The dominant species in the PFO1 wetland include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), and glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*). The PFO1 wetland soils are mapped as Raypol silt loam, Timakwa and Natchaug soils, Catden and Freetown Soils, and Saco silt loam. Portions of the PFO extend into areas where soils are mapped as Farmington-Nellis complex, 15

FIELD RECONNAISSANCE

Draft Field Memorandum
November 6, 2015
Page 2

to 35 percent slopes, very rocky (94E), Agawam-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes (229B), and Udorthents-Urban land complex (306), see wetlands figure for approximate wetland boundary.

The tributary to Sympaug Brook is located between the railroad right-of-way and the rear of 7, 9, 11, and 13 Durant Ave. Between 7 Durant Ave and 10 Library Pl the stream flows through a culvert under the road. A PEM wetland dominated by common reed borders on the tributary between the parking lots of 7 Durant Ave and 10 Library Pl.

These wetlands would both jurisdictional on the state level by having positive indicators of hydric soils and on the federal level by having positive indicators of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils and wetland hydrology. A wetland delineation would be required prior to filing of wetland permit applications.

Table 1
Wetland Resource Areas

<i>Wetland Resource Area Unit</i>	<i>Stream</i>		<i>Bordering Vegetated Wetland</i>	
	<i>Class</i>	<i>Width (ft.)</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Width (ft.)</i>
1	Perennial	5	-	-
2	Intermittent	1	PEM	5-10
3	Perennial	3-5	PEM	120
4	Intermittent	1-3	PEM/PFO	100
5*	Intermittent	1	-	-
6	Perennial	2-8	-	-
7	Perennial	3-10	PEM	3-10
8	-	-	PEM	50-100
9	Intermittent	1	PEM	50-80
10	Intermittent	1-3	-	-
11	Perennial	3-5	PEM/PFO	100
12	-	-	PEM	300-500
13	Intermittent	1-3	PEM	200
Total	6 Intermittent/ 5 Perennial	33 12	PEM PEM/PFO	1020 200

*Stream 5 does not cross the water main but is located within the water easement. When calculating the total the larger width was used.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

ENVIRONMENTAL SITE REVIEW

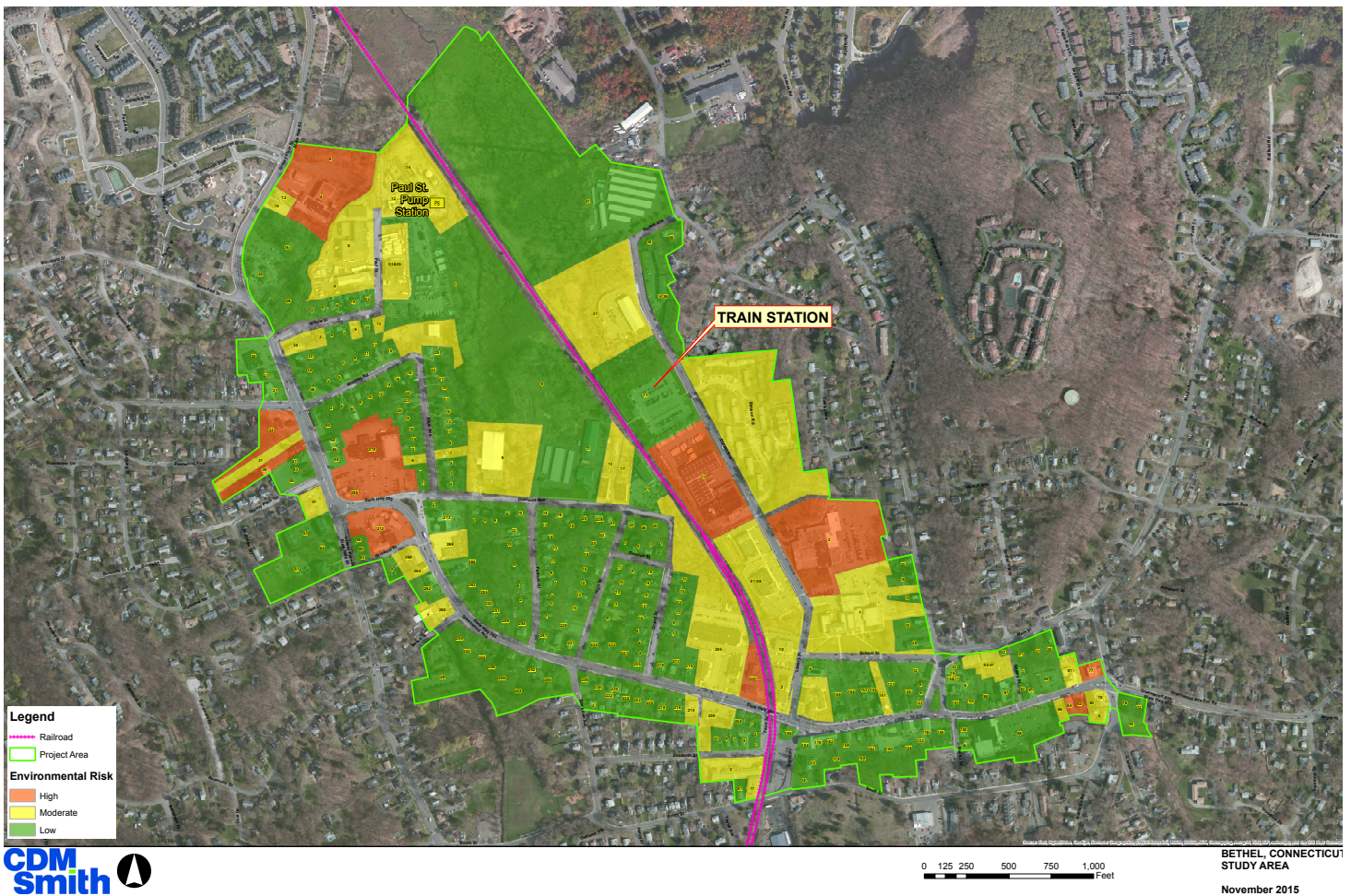
CDM Smith conducted an environmental site review of the Bethel TOD study area. The study area encompasses approximately 260 acres and over 300 parcels. The objective of the environmental site review is to provide a preliminary assessment of the potential environmental risk of each parcel in the study area with respect to future development.

The environmental site review included a review of available federal and state environmental databases and records. The environmental records search, performed by Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR), included a search of over 110 federal and state databases for listings on the properties within the study area. In addition, a site reconnaissance was performed by CDM Smith on October 27, 2015. During the site reconnaissance, properties within the study area were reviewed with respect to current use and operations of the property as well as past site uses, to the extent feasible, and their potential for environmental contamination from these uses.

Based on the information collected from the site reconnaissance and review of the EDR Report, each property within the study area was assigned an environmental risk of low, moderate or high. Properties classified with a low environmental risk did not have known environmental records and did not present visual evidence of environmental concern. Properties with a moderate classification include properties with a potential for environmental concern due to the current use of the property or a record of a prior spill or leaking underground storage tank. Properties categorized as having a higher potential risk for environmental concern during development include current and former gas station properties, current and former dry cleaning establishments and industrial/commercial properties with a known history of prior releases to the environment.

Approximately 60 properties were identified as having a potential moderate to high environmental risk. These properties are mapped on the attached figure. Parcels with a moderate and high risk warrant further environmental review prior to development.

ENVIRONMENTAL RISK MAP



Mapping showing all parcels and the determined level of environmental concern based upon available information indicating prior uses on the parcels. The moderate and higher risk parcels warrant further environmental review prior to development.

SOILS MAP



Mapping of all the soil types in the project area as classified by the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) Soil Survey.

MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils

Special Point Features

Water Features

Transportation

Background

Soil Area

Stony Spot

Very Stony Spot

Wet Spot

Other

Special Line Features

Streams and Canals

Rails

Interstate Highways

US Routes

Major Roads

Local Roads

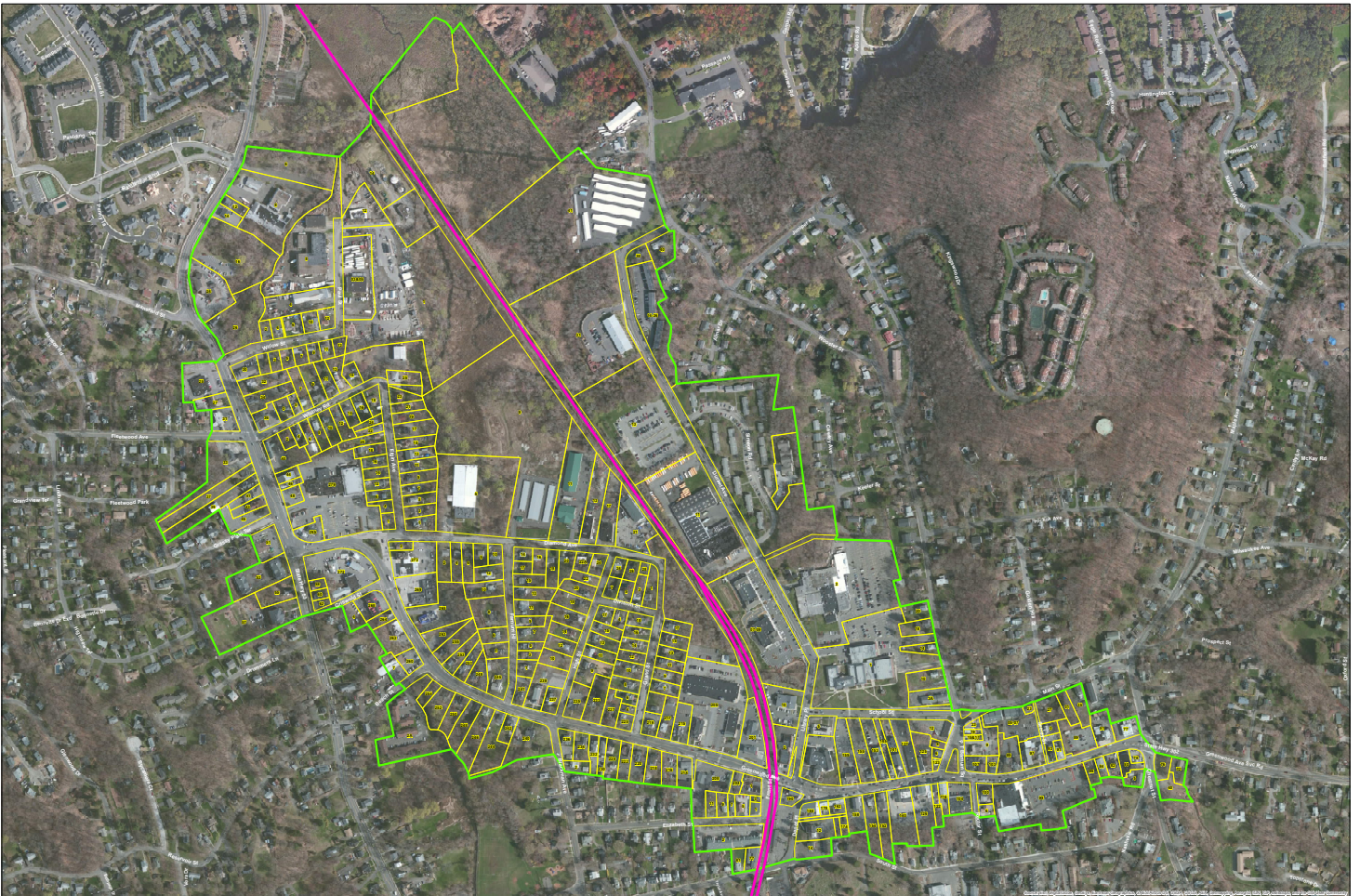
Aerial Photography

MAP UNIT LEGEND

State of Connecticut (CT600)				
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI	
3	Ridgebury, Leicester, and Whitman soils, 0 to 5 percent slopes, extremely stony	2.9	0.3%	
12	Raydol silt loam	49.6	5.0%	
13	Walpole sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	6.2	0.6%	
15	Scarboro muck, 0 to 3 percent slopes	5.6	0.6%	
17	Timakwa and Natchaug soils	23.4	2.3%	
18	Catden and Freetown soils	22.5	2.3%	
21A	Ninigret and Tisbury soils, 0 to 5 percent slopes	3.6	0.4%	
29A	Agawam fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	3.4	0.3%	
29B	Agawam fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	35.1	3.5%	
29C	Agawam fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	2.0	0.2%	
38C	Hinckley gravelly sandy loam, 3 to 15 percent slopes	11.6	1.2%	
38E	Hinckley gravelly sandy loam, 15 to 45 percent slopes	9.6	1.0%	
46C	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	12.7	1.3%	
62D	Canton and Charlton soils, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	8.8	0.9%	
73C	Charlton-Chaffield complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	9.2	0.9%	
73E	Charlton-Chaffield complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes, very rocky	14.8	1.5%	
75C	Hollis-Chaffield-Rock outcrop complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes	7.3	0.7%	
75E	Hollis-Chaffield-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes	57.3	5.7%	
76E	Rock outcrop-Hollis complex, 3 to 45 percent slopes	34.1	3.4%	
84B	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 3 to 8 percent slopes	0.1	0.0%	

State of Connecticut (CT600)				
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI	
86D	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	5.6	0.6%	
94C	Farmington-Nellis complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	8.1	0.8%	
94E	Farmington-Nellis complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very rocky	18.4	1.8%	
108	Saco silt loam	24.5	2.4%	
221A	Ninigret-Urban land complex, 0 to 5 percent slopes	48.1	4.8%	
229B	Agawam-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	60.3	6.0%	
229C	Agawam-Urban land complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	22.9	2.3%	
238C	Hinckley-Urban land complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes	87.4	8.7%	
245C	Woodbridge-Urban land complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	2.5	0.3%	
260B	Charlton-Urban land complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	8.4	0.8%	
260C	Charlton-Urban land complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	18.3	1.8%	
273C	Urban land-Charlton-Chaffield complex, rocky, 3 to 15 percent slopes	14.7	1.5%	
273E	Urban land-Charlton-Chaffield complex, rocky, 15 to 45 percent slopes	17.1	1.7%	
275E	Urban land-Chaffield-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes	0.7	0.1%	
284D	Paxton-Urban land complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes	1.6	0.2%	
305	Udorthents-Pits complex, gravelly	40.7	4.1%	
308	Udorthents-Urban land complex	239.2	23.9%	
307	Urban land	62.9	6.3%	
Totals for Area of Interest		1,001.4	100.0%	

WETLANDS MAP



Mapping showing the location of hydric soils taken from CT GIS and field observed wetlands.

SANITARY SEWER ANALYSIS

INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

INITIAL ANALYSIS

- 3 Collection System Service Areas in Bethel
- Each area is flow limited by terms stipulated in the IMA

Service Areas in Bethel and Flow Limitations

Service Area	Average Daily Flow Limit (gpd)	Max. Day Flow Limit (gpd)
Berkshire	80,000	201,600
Paul Street	1,330,000	4,032,000
Payne Road	590,000	1,872,000
Total	2,000,000	6,105,600

- TOD Study Area Served by Paul Street Pumping Station
- Average Daily Flow = 928,000 gallons per day (gpd)
- Estimated remaining capacity = 400,000 gpd
- Highest capacity need for TOD planning estimated at 200,000 gpd

Paul Street Pumping Station Average Daily Flow and Remaining Capacity

Pumping Station	Average Daily Flow	Estimated Remaining Capacity
Paul Street	928,841 gpd	400,000 gpd

Initial Analysis

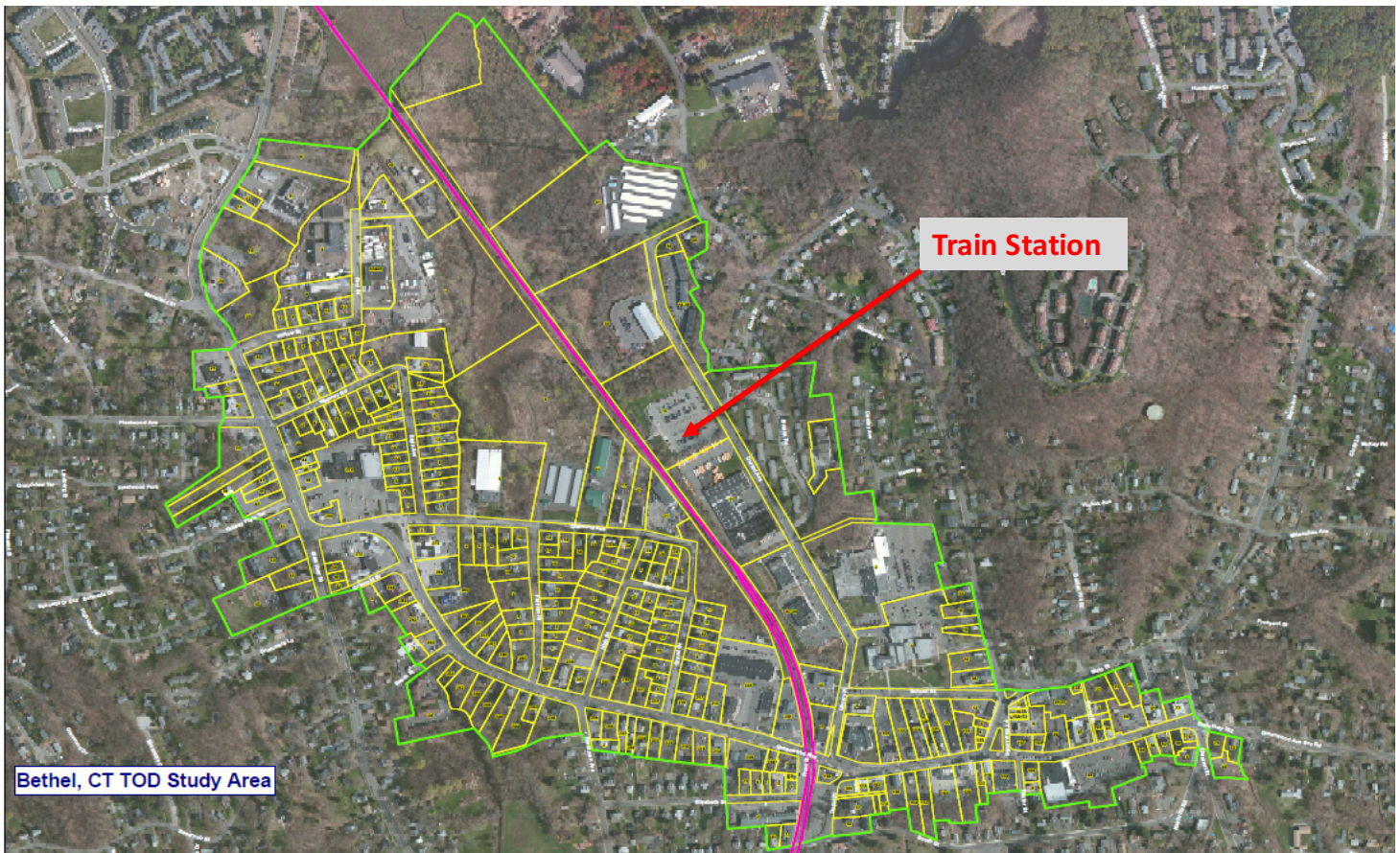
- Estimated remaining capacity = difference between Intermunicipal agreement permitted flow versus current average daily flow
- Flow Allocation is half of the remaining capacity
 - Factor of safety - 50% reserve capacity
 - Flow allocation pending Town's 1 and 1 Study and Site Specific Development Analysis (wetlands, floodplain, setbacks, etc.)

Analysis Summary

- 200,000 gpd potentially available for future development
- 40 specific parcels reviewed for potential for redevelopment
 - Sewer generation calculations
- 200,000 gpd can support:
 - Desired housing density
 - Professional Offices
 - Restaurants
 - Small Retail/Commercial Establishments

Paul Street Service Area Flow Allocation	
Service Area	Flow Allocation
Paul Street	200,000 <u>gpd</u>

GENERAL REDEVELOPMENT AREA



SANITARY SEWER ANALYSIS

INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CALCULATIONS

Parcel	Acres	Zoning	Possible Usage Type	Total Usage Flow (gpd)
1	3.1	Industrial	75 Three Bedroom Apartments	11,250
2	11.1	Industrial	375 Three Bedroom Apartments	56,250
3	10.8	Industrial	375 Three Bedroom Apartments	56,250
4	0.9	Commercial	Doctors Office	1,250
5	0.1	Commercial	None	0
6	0.5	Commercial	Doctors Office	1,250
7	0.5	Commercial	Doctors Office	1,250
8	0.4	Commercial	Doctors Office	1,250
9	0.3	Commercial	Doctors Office	1,250
10	0.4	Commercial	Doctors Office	1,250
11	0.1	Commercial	1 two bedroom apartment	150
12	0.2	Commercial	1 two bedroom apartment	150
13	0.1	Commercial	1 two bedrrom apartment	150
14	0.7	Commercial	Restaurant 150 seat	5,250
15	0.5	Commercial	Restaurant 150 seat	5,250
16	0.3	Commercial	Hair Stylist	1,000
17	3.0	Commercial	10 two bedroom Apartments / Supermarket	5,000
18	0.2	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
19	0.2	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
20	0.2	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
21	0.3	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
22	0.1	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
23	0.2	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
24	0.2	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
25	0.4	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
26	0.2	Professional Office	5000, sf office	275
27	0.2	Professional Office	5000, sf office	275
28	0.5	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
29	0.4	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
30	0.8	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
31	0.8	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
32	0.2	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
33	0.2	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
34	0.4	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
35	0.3	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
36	0.2	Commercial	Store or other Commercial	900
37	1.0	Commercial	Restaurant 195 seat	6,825
38	0.5	Residential Multi Family	5 unit Multi Family	750
39	2.2	Residential Multi Family	20 unit Multi Family	3,000
40	0.3	Residential Multi Family	2 unit Multi Family	750
		Additional Development	164 Three Bedroom Apartments	24,600
Total	43.0		Total	200,000

TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY & CONNECTIVITY

Top Public Comments on Bethel Center Streets		
	<i>General Comment</i>	<i>No. of Comments</i>
WALKABILITY	Provide better sidewalks, improve walkability	24
OFF-STREET PARKING	Provide better or more off-street parking	16
BICYCLES	Provide bike lanes & new bicycle facilities	8
TRAFFIC	Provide relief from traffic congestion	7
GREENWAY	Create greenway through wetlands north of RR station	7
TRANSIT	Provide better transit	6
ON-STREET PARKING	Remove existing on-street parking for better safety	6
RR STATION	Provide better pedestrians links to the RR Station	5
CAR FREE SPACES	Convert specific streets to car-free public spaces	4
PARKS	Improve or provide new parks or public spaces	3

TRANSPORTATION SUMMARY

INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

Motorized Transportation

- Significant traffic on principal arterials
 - Route 53: 11,200 vehicles per day
 - Route 302: 14,100 vehicles per day
- Bethel Station: 257 average weekday passengers (95% round trip)
- 4 signalized intersections within TOD area
- No significant capacity constrained intersections/roadways
- One RR crossing in study area creates barrier to mobility & access to new TOD uses

Non-Motorized Transportation

- The vibrant pedestrian scale of town center should be replicated in the new TOD district
- Bethel train station is 0.4 miles north of Bethel Town Center
- Pedestrian links to TOD areas & the train station are essential
- A standardized streetscape treatment is desirable
- State highways limit bicycle & pedestrian mobility
- Local roadways limited
- Complete streets needed



WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?

What are Complete Streets?

"Complete Streets" is a set of principles where streets are designed to enable safe and convenient access and travel for **all users**, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. More walkable Complete Streets enable active transportation, promote environmental quality, enhance economic development and create safer and more livable communities.*

A Complete Streets Toolbox for Bethel Center might include:

- P** Pedestrian Safety
- T** Traffic Control
- B** Bicycle Safety
- I** Transit/ Intermodal Enhancements

*For more information about Complete Streets visit the *National Complete Streets Coalition's* webpage at: <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>

Contents

Pedestrian Safety

- P-1** High Visibility Crosswalks
- P-2** Mid-Block Crosswalks
- P-3** Pedestrian Crossing Signals
- P-4** Moveable Parklets
- P-5** Shared Spaces (Woonerfs)
- P-6** Street Trees & Streetscaping



Traffic Control

- T-1** On-Street Parking
- T-2** Streets Trees & Other Visual Treatments
- T-3** Speed Tables & Speed Humps
- T-4** Curb Radius Reduction
- T-5** Narrow Travel Lanes/ Road Diet



Bicycle Safety

- B-1** Sharrows
- B-2** Bicycle Boulevards
- B-3** Bike Lanes
- B-4** Cycle Tracks
- B-5** Bicycle Parking



Intermodal & Transit Enhancements

- I-1** Bus Pullout
- I-2** Enhanced Bus Shelters



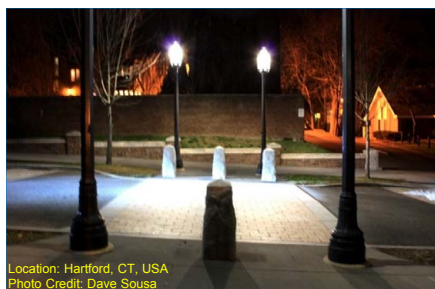
P-1 High Visibility Crosswalks

Wider, better-designed and more articulated crosswalks greatly improve pedestrian safety. Where possible, extend crosswalks through the tips of medians to provide a pedestrian safety zone. Examples of safe crosswalks in arterial streets include highly illuminated crosswalks, raised crosswalks, raised intersections, and crosswalks with pedestrian count-down signals.



P-2 Mid-Block Crosswalks

Mid-block crosswalks are ped or bike crossings at locations that are not coincident with intersecting streets. They require particular care in design since motorists tend to travel higher speeds between intersections and are not expecting to encounter pedestrians. Safety improvements include area lighting, signage, and varying degrees of flashing warning lights or traffic signals (depending on traffic volumes and speeds). Other particularly effective traffic calming devices at mid-block X-ings include bump-outs, speed tables and raised crosswalks.



P-3 Pedestrian Crossing Signals

Active warning beacons are user-actuated flashing lights that supplement warning signs at un-signalized intersections or mid-block crosswalks. Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFBs), a type of active warning beacon, use an irregular flash pattern similar to emergency flashers on police vehicles. These devices should be used to alert drivers to yield where bicyclists and pedestrians have the right-of-way crossing a road.



P-4 Movable Parklets

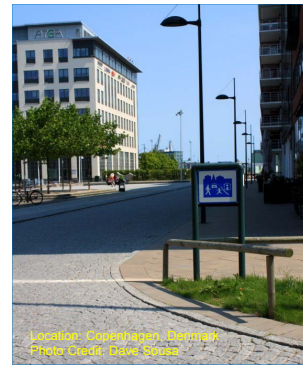
A parklet is a temporary use of space in the dedicated public right-of-way (parking spaces, unused bus stops, and other types of vehicular and non-vehicular zones) for public uses such as sidewalk cafes, seating or bicycle parking.

Parklets are intended to be publicly accessible space for the enjoyment and use of all citizens, and are typically privately constructed and maintained.



P-5 Shared Spaces (Woonerfs)

Removal of traffic guides on narrow local streets diminishes priority and dominance of vehicular drivers. The roadway is shared among all users including pedestrians and bicyclists. This causes drivers to reduce speeds. Appropriate placement of Woonerfs is critical. The design should be reserved for residential areas and narrow urban streets where low traffic speed is prevalent.



P-6 Street Trees and Streetscaping

Urban landscape and streetscaping help create and define desirable urban spaces. Quality streetscaping improves communities with greener, friendlier public spaces.

Trees also help mitigate urban heat island effects and provide shading for pedestrians.



B-1 Shared Use Lanes or Sharrows

A shared-lane marking or sharrow is a street marking installed in a travel lane that is too narrow to allow formal bicycle lanes. Sharrows remind motorists that a bicyclist may also use the lane.

These symbols also serve to assist motorists and bicyclists with maintaining a position in a shared lane in order to encourage safe passing of bicyclists by motorists. The directional nature of chevrons also serve to reduce the incidence of wrong-way bicycling.



B-2 Bicycle Boulevards

Bicycle boulevards are narrow, low-volume streets with low speed limits that give bicyclists priority over other modes of transportation. They allow localized vehicle traffic but are optimized for bicycle usage. The design improves bicyclist safety and comfort for riding in urban areas.



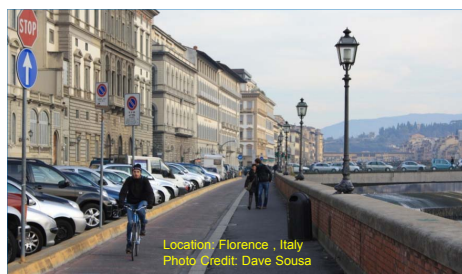
B-3 Bicycle Lanes

Bike lanes increase safety by separating cyclists from passing motorists. Motorists become more aware of the presence of cyclists and moderate their driving behavior accordingly. Visibility of bike lanes can be enhanced with colored pavement and is typically used at potential areas of conflict such as intersections and driveways. Buffers can be added to bicycle lanes in order to further separate them from the adjacent travel lane and/or parking lane – providing improved safety.



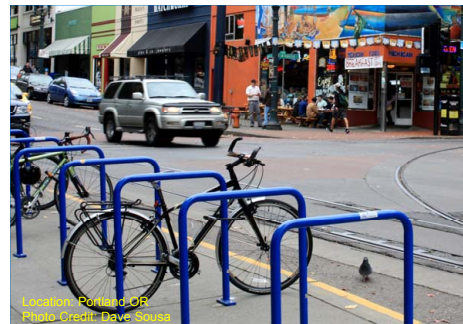
B-4 Cycle Tracks or Protected Bike Lanes

Cycle tracks provide vertical and horizontal separation between motor vehicles and cyclists and are best situated between the on-street parking lane and the sidewalk to provide ultimate separation. A recent study by the Harvard School of Public Health reveals that cycle tracks had a 28% lower injury rate vs. on-street bike lanes. They are more attractive for bicyclists of all levels and ages and are preferred over on-street bike lanes.



B-5 Bike Parking

Bicycle parking needs to be visible, accessible, and conveniently located. Racks should support both wheels and enable the user to lock the frame and wheels of the bike with a cable or U-shaped lock. Long-term parking areas should be covered, well lit, and visible.



T-1 On-Street Parking

The presence and availability of on-street parking serves several critical needs on urban streets including: to meet parking needs of adjacent uses (especially retail uses); to protect pedestrians from moving traffic; and to increase activity on the street.

On-street parking has other benefits:

- Supports the local commercial economic.
- Increases pedestrian comfort by providing a buffer from moving traffic.
- Slows traffic, making pedestrian crossing safer.
- Facilitates safe and convenient curb-side drop-off of passengers.
- Increases pedestrian activity on the street.
- Provides a cue to motorists that travel speeds are reduced and that they are entering a low speed area.

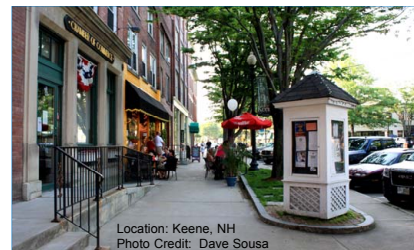


T-2

Street Trees & Other Visual Treatments

Streetscaping improvements such as street trees, pedestrian-level ornamental street lights, bollards, etc., visually reinforce that the street is in a high pedestrian, slow traffic zone. They also provide vertical elements that enclose the street or reinforce the 'street-wall'.

Studies have shown that vertical enclosure of the street reduces the perceived width of the street and causes drivers to reflexively slow down.

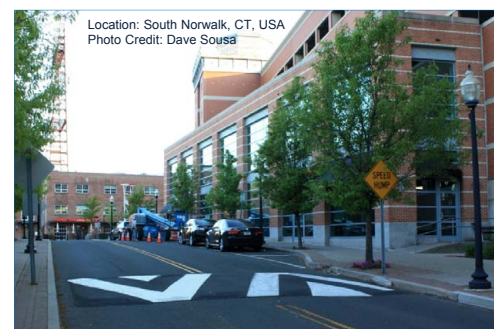


T-3

Speed Tables and Speed Humps

Speed tables or raised intersections provide vertical deflection that slows vehicle speeds. Speed tables are long enough for the wheelbase of a car to rest on top which allows cars to traverse them without bottoming out.

A speed hump is a 3 to 4 inch high raised area of pavement used to reduce vehicle speed on low-volume streets. They are generally 12 to 14 feet long, parabolic in shape and span the width of the road. Warning signs and pavement markings placed in advance of humps notify motorists of their presence.



T-4 Curb Radius Reduction

The larger the radius of an intersection curb-line, the faster a vehicle can move around that corner. Tight intersection turning radii, or curb radius reduction should be provided in high pedestrian areas to improve pedestrian safety.

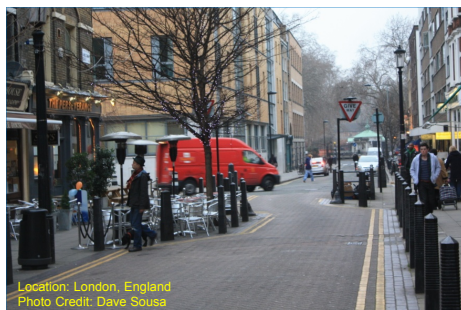
Reducing a corner radius can:

- Inhibit the speed of turning vehicles
- Give pedestrians a better chance to see and be seen by approaching traffic
- Add sidewalk space, thereby shortening the distance to the other side of the street



T-5 Narrow Traffic Lanes and Road Diet

Suburban and urban streets should be designed for slower travel speeds and with narrower travel lanes (11' vs. 12' to 13') and narrower or no shoulders. Suburban streets are often designed using criteria that are more appropriate for rural streets – that is, they are designed for speed in the misguided belief that speed increases capacity. For a suburban street, the capacity is controlled at signalized intersections. Red light times can be shorter on streets with slower moving traffic and narrower crosswalks allow pedestrians to cross more quickly, further lowering red light durations. Narrowing lanes as part of a road diet, allows reallocation of excess automobile operating space for other amenities such as sidewalks, landscaping, bicycle amenities, medians, etc.



I-1 Bus Pullout

A bus pullout is a zoned area designated for frequent bus stops. They prevent blocking of traffic during boarding and alighting and may improve the safety of users accessing or leaving the bus.

If buses have difficulty merging back into traffic, “yield to bus” laws may be instituted.



I-2 Enhanced Bus Shelters

Bus shelters protect passengers from inclement weather while waiting for the bus. Modern bus shelters may include LED lighting, benches, trash receptacles, system mapping, and dynamic messaging signs for users.

Route markers show the direction of travel for a bus line. These signs may also include bus stop location, schedules, maps, and alternative bus lines. These signs help users orient themselves in the transit system and makes navigation towards their destination easier.



ECONOMIC & MARKET ANALYSIS



EXISTING CONDITIONS

ECONOMIC & MARKET ANALYSIS

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS & TRENDS

Population growth: Bethel's population is growing at a modest rate – a 1.6 percent increase between the 2010 Census of Population and the Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey, or just slightly less than one percent annually (Table 1). This is roughly the rate of growth the town has experienced since 2000, and roughly in line with the rates of growth of Fairfield

County and the State of Connecticut. All three jurisdictions – the town, county, and state – grew at a fast clip in the early- and mid-20th century, absorbing commuters from the New York metropolitan area. All three are still growing, but no longer at the blistering speed of the past.

Year	Bethel		Fairfield County		Connecticut	
	Pop.	% change	Pop.	% change	Pop.	% change
1940	4,105		418,384		1,709,242	
1950	5,104	24.3%	504,342	20.5%	2,007,280	17.4%
1960	8,200	60.7%	653,589	29.6%	2,535,234	26.3%
1970	10,495	33.5%	792,814	21.3%	3,031,709	19.6%
1980	16,004	46.2%	807,143	1.8%	3,107,576	2.5%
1990	17,541	9.6%	827,645	2.5%	3,287,116	5.8%
2000	18,067	3.0%	882,567	6.6%	3,405,565	3.6%
2010	18,377	2.9%	905,342	3.9%	3,545,837	4.9%
2013 (est.)	18,887	2.8%	926,233	2.3%	3,583,561	1.1%

TABLE 1: Population change between 1940-2013 in Bethel, Fairfield County, and the State of Connecticut.

Source: US Census Bureau, *Census of Population* and *American Community Survey*.

Households: Bethel's rate of household formation is also growing at a modest rate (Table 2). The town added 228 households between 2010-2013 – a 3.5 percent increase, versus 0.3 percent in Fairfield County and a 0.2 percent decline in the overall state. Every new household generates roughly \$19,500 in new demand for retail products and services, so the 228 households it added between 2010-2013 brought \$4.4 million in new retail demand to the community.

Age: The median age of Bethel's and Fairfield County's residents dropped between 2010-2013, by 1.9 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively (Table 2). The median age of a Connecticut resident increased by 1.8 percent during this time period, from 39.5 years to 40.2 years.

Employment: The number of Bethel residents in the labor force grew between 2010-2013, with increases in both those in the labor force who are employed and unemployed (Table 4). The number of residents not in the labor force (meaning those who are not employed and who are not looking for work) dropped by 20 percent.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS & TRENDS

Characteristic	Bethel			Fairfield County			Connecticut		
	2010	2013	% ch	2010	2013	% ch	2010	2013	% ch
Total population	18,377	18,887	2.8%	905,342	926,233	2.3%	3,545,837	3,583,561	1.1%
Median age	41.7	40.9	-1.9%	39.1	38.5	-1.5%	39.5	40.2	1.8%
Total households	6,590	6,818	3.5%	331,782	332,655	0.3%	1,359,218	1,355,849	-0.2%
Average household size	2.68	2.74	2.2%	2.52	2.73	8.3%	2.52	2.55	1.2%
Median household income	\$ 83,483	85,589	2.5%	81,268	82,283	1.2%	67,740	69,461	2.5%

TABLE 2: Various demographic characteristics for Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut, 2010-2013. *Sources:* US Census Bureau, *Census of Population and American Community Survey*.

Educational attainment	Bethel			Fairfield County			Connecticut		
	2010	2013	% ch	2010	2013	% ch	2010	2013	% ch
Pop. 25 years and over	12,792	12,940	1.2%	607,347	624,597	2.8%	2,398,283	2,443,761	1.9%
Less than high school grad	6.3%	6.7%	6.3%	11.7%	11.0%	-6.0%	11.6%	10.8%	-6.9%
High school graduate	29.0%	24.5%	-15.5%	23.8%	22.8%	-4.2%	28.6%	27.8%	-2.8%
Some college	23.3%	28.9%	24.0%	20.9%	21.5%	2.9%	24.6%	25.0%	1.6%
Bachelor's degree	25.5%	23.9%	-6.3%	24.6%	25.3%	2.8%	19.9%	20.4%	2.5%
Graduate or prof degree	15.8%	15.9%	0.6%	19.0%	19.5%	2.6%	15.3%	16.1%	5.2%

TABLE 3: Educational attainment of residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut, 2010-2013. *Sources:* US Census Bureau, *Census of Population and American Community Survey*.

Employment status	Bethel			Fairfield County			Connecticut		
	2010	2013	% ch	2010	2013	% ch	2010	2013	% ch
Pop. 15 years and over	14,553	15,149	4.1%	703,812	727,258	3.3%	2,820,837	2,879,150	2.1%
In labor force	10,012	11,392	13.8%	475,682	498,574	4.8%	1,919,849	1,958,723	2.0%
Employed	9,328	10,301	10.4%	439,341	449,106	2.2%	1,765,549	1,759,412	-0.3%
Unemployed	6.9%	9.6%	39.1%	5.1%	6.8%	33.3%	5.2%	6.6%	26.9%
Not in labor force	31.2%	24.8%	-20.5%	32.4%	31.4%	-3.1%	31.9%	32.0%	0.3%

TABLE 4: Employment status of residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut, 2010-2013. *Sources:* US Census Bureau, *Census of Population and American Community Survey*.

Occupations: Almost half of Bethel's residents (44 percent) work in management, business, science, and arts occupations, with sales and office occupations accounting for more than one-quarter of the town's jobs (Table 6). Jobs in service occupations grew by the largest percentage between 2010-2013, though – a 39 percent increase. Jobs in natural resources, construction, and maintenance dropped by about 10 percent.

Industries: Businesses in the educational services, health care, and social assistance industries are Bethel's largest employers, accounting for about one-quarter

of all the town's jobs (Table 7). Three other industry groups – manufacturing, retail trade, and professional, scientific, management, administration, and waste remediation – each account for around 12-14 percent of the community's jobs. Most industry groups added jobs between 2010-2013; only a few lost jobs, and only one of those – wholesale trade – experienced significant job loss.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ECONOMIC & MARKET ANALYSIS

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS & TRENDS

Class of worker	2010	2013	%	% change
Private wage and salary workers	7,399	8,323	81%	12.5%
Government workers	1,236	1,268	12%	2.6%
Self-employed and unpaid family workers	688	703	7%	2.2%

TABLE 5: Class of worker of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut residents, 2010-2013. *Sources:* US Census Bureau, *Census of Population* and *American Community Survey*.

Occupation	2010	2013	%	% change
Mgmt, business, science, arts occupations	4,188	4,531	44%	8.2%
Service occupations	1,096	1,520	15%	38.7%
Sales and office occupations	2,527	2,784	27%	10.2%
Natural resources, construction, maintenance	752	680	7%	-9.6%
Production, transportation, material moving	760	779	8%	2.5%

TABLE 6: Occupations in which residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut are employed, 2010-2013. *Sources:* US Census Bureau, *Census of Population* and *American Community Survey*.

Industry	2010	2013	%	% change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing/hunting, mining	0	29	0%	222.2%
Construction	567	711	7%	25.4%
Manufacturing	1,261	1,252	12%	-0.7%
Wholesale trade	307	177	2%	-42.3%
Retail trade	1,293	1,229	12%	-4.9%
Transportation/warehousing, utilities	319	451	4%	41.4%
Information	263	253	2%	-3.8%
Finance/insurance, real estate/rental/leasing	749	757	7%	1.1%
Prof., scientific, mgmt.; admin + waste mgmt.	1,231	1,476	14%	19.9%
Educ svcs, health care/social assistance	2,231	2,325	23%	4.2%
Arts, ent., recreation; accommodation, food svcs	567	667	6%	17.6%
Other services (except public administration)	351	745	7%	112.3%
Public administration	175	222	2%	26.9%

TABLE 7: Industries in which residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut are employed, 2010-2013. *Sources:* US Census Bureau, *Census of Population* and *American Community Survey*.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS & TRENDS

Commuting: The overwhelming majority of employed Bethel residents commute to work by car, truck, or van (Table 8). Most of them drive alone, although those who carpool is increasing at a rate far outpacing that of the County or State. A small percentage use public transportation or walk to work. A surprisingly small percentage – only 3.3 percent – work from home-based businesses. And, the number of Bethel residents working from home-based businesses actually declined be-

tween 2010-2013, unlike the situation in the County, State, and overall nation, all of which have experienced increases in home-based workers in recent years.

Travel time: The mean amount of time it takes for employed Bethel residents to commute to work was 30.7 minutes in 2013, an increase of almost 12 percent over 2010, when the mean travel time was 27.5 minutes (Table 8).

Commuting to work	Bethel			% change	
	2010	2013	% change	County	State
Workers, 16 years and over	9,095	10,107	11.1%	2.4%	0.1%
Car, truck, or van – drove alone	7,648	8,227	7.6%	2.0%	-0.4%
Car, truck, or van - carpooled	540	679	25.7%	11.2%	0.6%
Public transportation (excluding taxicabs)	271	494	82.3%	2.9%	5.6%
Walked	193	194	0.5%	-9.8%	0.4%
Other means	64	179	179.7%	-2.6%	-7.0%
Worked at home	379	334	-11.9%	3.2%	4.4%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	27.5	30.7	11.6%	0.7%	0.8%

TABLE 8: Commuting characteristics of employed residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut, 2010-2013.
Sources: US Census Bureau, *Census of Population and American Community Survey*.

EXISTING BUSINESS DISTRIBUTION

ECONOMIC & MARKET ANALYSIS

Largest industry groups: In terms of numbers of workers, the health care and social assistance industry group is Bethel's largest. But manufacturing produces, by far, the most revenues.

Retail trade, hotels, and restaurants: Retail trade accounts for only 10.4 percent of Bethel's business entities, which is surprisingly low for a community of Bethel's size. Nationally, 14.3 percent of all business establishments are retail businesses. Similarly, a smaller percentage of Bethel's businesses are hotels or

restaurants ("accommodation and food services") – 6.1 percent, versus 8.9 percent nationally.

The low percentages of businesses in these two industry groups, relative to the overall US, can be partly accounted for by Bethel's relatively large percentage of manufacturing businesses – but only partly. Assuming the community is experiencing unmet consumer demand in these categories, this could suggest opportunities to create new businesses in these categories.

NAICS	Industry	Businesses	Workers	Revenues
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing/hunting	0.3%	0.4%	2.3%
21	Mining, quarrying; oil/gas extraction	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%
22	Utilities	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
23	Construction	14.2%	8.1%	9.7%
31-33	Manufacturing	7.1%	17.4%	34.6%
42	Wholesale trade	4.2%	3.5%	24.5%
44-45	Retail trade	10.4%	10.5%	8.0%
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	1.4%	3.0%	1.7%
51	Information	1.4%	1.5%	1.0%
52	Finance and insurance	4.6%	2.5%	1.7%
53	Real estate and rental/leasing	4.0%	3.5%	2.9%
54	Professional, scientific, technical services	9.3%	5.3%	2.8%
55	Mgmt of companies and enterprises	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
56	Admin/support; waste mgmt./remediation	5.8%	4.2%	4.7%
61	Educational services	2.3%	5.4%	0.1%
62	Health care and social assistance	9.5%	19.2%	2.4%
71	Arts, entertainment, recreation	1.0%	0.9%	0.2%
72	Accommodation and food services	6.1%	6.1%	1.7%
81	Other services (except public administration)	11.7%	4.7%	0.9%
92	Public administration	3.9%	3.3%	-
99	Unclassified establishments	2.3%	0.3%	0.1%

TABLE 9: Distribution of business entities in Bethel according to North American Industry Classification System.
Source: InfoUSA.

Shopping center inventory: We compiled an inventory of shopping centers over 25,000 square feet and within 15 miles of the Bethel Public Library. We found that shopping center space is relatively limited within three miles of the Library – a total of just 267,899 square feet. But within five miles, there are nearly 3 million square feet of shopping center space (including Danbury Fair) and, within 15 miles, 7.2 million square feet. In addition, this 15-mile radius contains more than one million square feet of freestanding retail shops and restaurants.

Largest shopping centers: The largest shopping centers within 15 miles of the Public Library are Danbury Fair Mall (1.3 million square feet) and Westfield Trumbull (1.1 million square feet). With the exception of these two regional enclosed shopping malls, most shopping centers within 15 miles of the Public Library are open-air community shopping centers anchored by grocery stores and/or big-box stores.

Dist	Name/address	SF	Representative tenants
3.4	Danbury Fair Mall 7 Backus Ave; Danbury	1,289,000	Lord & Taylor, Forever 21, Chipotle
13.8	Westfield Trumbull 5065 Main St; Trumbull	1,130,472	Macys, Target, JCPenney, Lord & Taylor
11.6	Highlands Center 100 Independent Way; Brewster NY	377,000	Michaels, Marshalls, Kohls, Home Depot
3.3	Eagle Rd Shopping Center 2 International Drive; Danbury	319,789	Lowes, Cinema Theater, Best Buy
12.9	Southbury Shopping Plaza 100 Main St; Southbury	300,000	Kmart, DressBarn, Panera, Stop & Shop
12.3	Litchfield Crossings 169 Danbury Rd; New Milford	228,000	Big Lots, Home Goods, Kohls
12.5	New Milford Plaza 164-176 Danbury Rd; New Milford	226,762	Walmart, Super Stop & Shop, Dollar Tree
3.7	North Street Shopping Center 1 Padanaram Rd; Danbury	211,460	Dollar Tree, Burlington Coat Factory
4.5	Candlewood Lake Plaza 14 Candlewood Lake Rd; Brookfield	210,734	Raymour & Flanigan, Bed Bath & Beyond
3.8	Danbury Square 15 Backus Ave; Danbury	194,032	Toys R Us, Kids R Us, Barnes & Noble
13.4	Putnam Plaza Shopping Center 1936 US Rt 6; Carmel NY	193,000	Starbucks, Rite Aid, NY Sports Club
9.1	Lakeview Plaza 1511-1515 Rte 22; Brewster NY	185,006	Sleepys, Rite Aid, Citizens National

TABLE 10: The 12 largest shopping centers within 15 miles of the Bethel Public Library. *Source:* ICSC, “Global Shopping Center Directory”.

SALES VOIDS

ECONOMIC & MARKET ANALYSIS

Sales void analysis measures the difference between the amount of money that residents of a given area are likely to spend on products and services, based on their demographic characteristics, and the sales that businesses within that given area are attracting. Generally speaking, a negative value represents sales leak-

age – meaning, typically, that residents are shopping in other communities and/or online. A positive value represents a sales surplus – meaning, typically, that shoppers who live outside the given area are making purchases within that area.

NAICS	Store category	Supply	Demand	Void
441	Motor vehicles + parts dealers	\$ 6,031,000	25,135,000	-19,104,000
442	Furniture + home furnishings stores	411,000	3,165,000	-2,754,000
443	Electronics + appliance stores	258,000	3,930,000	-3,672,000
444	Bldg mat'l, garden equip + supply stores	6,215,000	4,079,000	2,136,000
445	Food + beverage stores	18,808,000	27,016,000	-8,208,000
446	Health + personal care stores	88,353,000	11,524,000	76,829,000
447	Gasoline stations	2,476,000	10,278,000	-7,802,000
448	Clothing + clothing accessories stores	1,982,000	9,692,000	-7,710,000
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book, music stores	3,019,000	3,089,000	-70,000
452	General merchandise stores	19,952,000	15,372,000	4,580,000
453	Miscellaneous store retailers ¹	1,900,000	3,907,000	-2,007,000
454	Nonstore retailers ²	21,157,000	9,242,000	11,915,000
	TOTAL RETAIL	170,562,000	126,429,000	44,133,000
722	Food services + drinking places	14,981,000	14,855,000	126,000
	TOTAL RETAIL + FOOD/DRINK	185,543,000	141,284,000	44,259,000

TABLE 11: Retail sales voids in Bethel. *Sources:* ESRI, US Census Bureau, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, CLUE Group.

¹ “Miscellaneous store retailers” includes florists, used merchandise stores, pet stores, office supply stores, gift and souvenir stores, art dealers, tobacco stores, and mobile home dealers.

² “Nonstore retailers” includes businesses that sell products and services via venues other than traditional stores, such as by mail order, door-to-door sales, in-home demonstrations, or vending machines, or by making direct deliveries, as is the case with home-delivered newspapers or heating oil.

We conducted sales void analyses for the Town of Bethel, then for the areas within ¼ mile, ½ mile, 1 mile, 2.5 miles, and 5 miles from the Bethel Public Library.

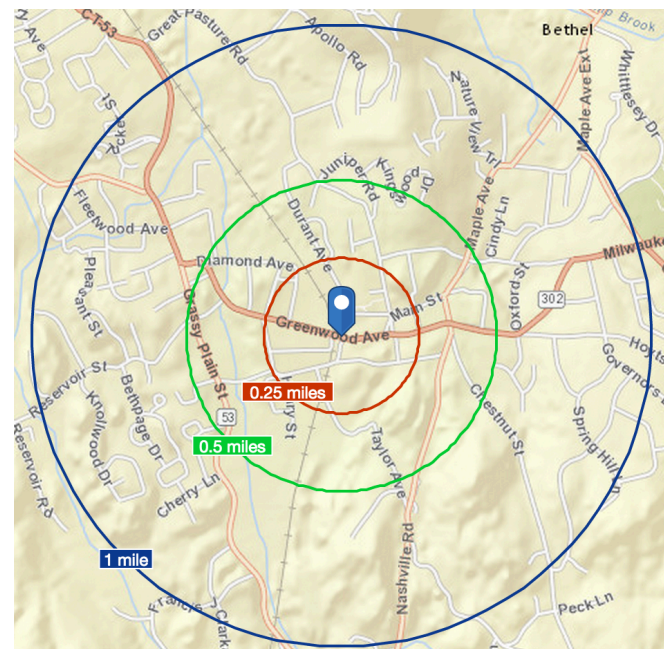
Bethel: Not too surprisingly, given that retail businesses comprise only 10 percent of Bethel's business entities, Bethel is experiencing sales leakages in almost all store categories. It has a very substantial surplus in the "health and personal care stores" store category that offsets sales leakages in most other categories,

giving the community a net sales surplus. But there are numerous categories in which it could be possible to recapture sales leakages by adding new product or service lines or new businesses to the downtown district, including furniture/home furnishings, specialty groceries and beverages, and – under certain circumstances – clothing/clothing accessories.

NAICS	Store category	Distance from Bethel Public Library				
		¼ mile	½ mile	1 mile	2.5 miles	5 miles
441	Motor vehicles + parts dealers	- 1,062,000	- 4,097,000	-17,073,000	- 9,585,000	159,719,000
442	Furniture + home furnishings stores	- 136,000	- 526,000	- 2,453,000	- 3,568,000	5,698,000
443	Electronics + appliance stores	- 169,000	- 722,000	- 3,311,000	- 9,282,000	75,661,000
444	Bldg mat'l, garden equip + supply stores	1,900,000	2,499,000	2,428,000	- 865,000	16,656,000
445	Food + beverage stores	9,964,000	9,313,000	- 5,563,000	- 59,436,000	- 69,232,000
446	Health + personal care stores	- 492,000	3,746,000	77,983,000	68,000,000	46,696,000
447	Gasoline stations	- 441,000	- 2,175,000	- 6,875,000	- 20,429,000	- 47,200,000
448	Clothing + clothing accessories stores	284,000	- 981,000	- 6,799,000	- 19,994,000	76,252,000
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book, music stores	391,000	181,000	154,000	- 4,863,000	11,805,000
452	General merchandise stores	13,942,000	15,607,000	6,134,000	- 2,155,000	107,794,000
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	354,000	- 24,000	- 1,624,000	- 3,946,000	- 3,190,000
454	Nonstore retailers	5,979,000	8,785,000	12,323,000	15,837,000	- 7,718,000
	TOTAL RETAIL	30,514,000	31,606,000	54,694,000	- 50,286,000	372,941,000
722	Food services + drinking places	3,056,000	3,475,000	1,473,000	- 7,063,000	755,000
	TOTAL RETAIL + FOOD/DRINK	33,570,000	35,081,000	56,167,000	- 57,349,000	373,696,000

TABLE 12: Retail sales voids in the areas within ¼, ½, 1, 2.5, and 5 miles of the Bethel Public Library. Sources: ESRI, US Census Bureau, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, CLUE Group.

Radii: The sales void analysis of the ¼-mile to 5-mile radii from the Bethel Public Library demonstrates the enormous market impact of the Danbury Fair Mall and the smaller shopping centers and big-box stores near it. Within the ¼ mile radius (which essentially covers downtown Bethel and parts of adjacent neighborhoods), there are a number of sales surpluses. But, with each successive radius, these surpluses gradually erode. This suggests that there might be some opportunities to recapture sales leakages for community-serving goods and services from neighborhoods closer to the downtown area.



ECONOMIC & MARKET ANALYSIS

- **Where do you usually dine out?** The most frequent responses were Bethel, Putnam House, Famous Pizza, La Zingara, pizza, O'Neils, Molten Java, Grassy Plain Pizza, downtown, Danbury, and Greenwoods.

- **Where do you usually shop for groceries?** Almost all respondents cited Caraluzzi's or Bethel Food; a few mentioned Stop & Shop, Costco, or ShopRite.

- **What new businesses would you most like to see downtown?** Clothing and restaurants were the most popular suggestions, with numerous suggestions for specific types of restaurants – Mexican, seafood, Thai, vegetarian, Indian, bakeries, “anything but pizza”. A number of people also suggested arts-related businesses, sports-related businesses, theater (presumably live theater), music, and groceries.

- **What three words come to mind when you think about downtown Bethel?** Most responses were positive. The words most frequently mentioned were quaint, charming, cute, friendly, walkable, safe, and clean. There were some negative words, also – empty, vacant, expensive.

- **Where do you usually shop for clothes?** More than three-quarters of respondents replied “Danbury Fair”. Some also mentioned Target, Kohl’s, and online.



